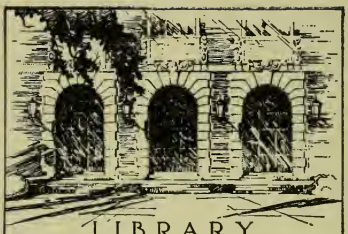

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3 of the characters were all Irish peers (Lord Powerscourt, Lord Rossmore & Lord Mountmorres).

THE

OFFICER'S DAUGHTER.

THE

OFFICER'S DAUGHTER;

OR,

A VISIT TO IRELAND

IN 1790.

BY

THE DAUGHTER OF A CAPTAIN IN THE NAVY,
DECEASED.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY JOYCE GOLD, SHOE LANE.

1810.

TO THE

HON. MRS. FANE.

MADAM,

A LONG knowledge of your eminent virtues in the respective characters of wife, mother, and friend, induced me to request the honour of dedicating this first effort of my imagination to you, hoping to receive the same indulgence from the world that you, I am sure, will bestow.

No one has yet repented throwing themselves on a "British Public;" and an "Officer's Daughter",

has ever had a claim on their humanity, trusting that the "respectable society of Reviewers" in their judgment will remember mercy, and "gently scan" the imperfections of the following work; and if they cannot highly extol, they will not severely condemn.

I remain, with the utmost gratitude for your support, and that of the respectable friends who have assisted my cause,

MADAM,

Your obedient humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

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The Author hopes that the Subscribers who have honoured her with their names, will pardon any omission which may occur from their arriving too late for the press. She takes this opportunity of expressing her thanks, and to assure them that if their names do not appear, they will be deeply engraven on her heart, and their kindness ever gratefully acknowledged.

THE

OFFICER'S DAUGHTER.

CHAP. I.

It was one of those fine days in September, when the temperature of the air exhilarates the spirits, and the sun cheers without enervating, that a Holyhead packet got under weigh, after having waited some time for a fair wind. The passengers were all assembled at the inn, and it was with joy they heard the summons to repair on board. One there was, indeed, whose heart was too firmly attached to England not to heave a sigh at quitting it.

Bitter and painful were the feelings of Louisa Courteney when she left the shore; her spirits sunk at the idea of leaving a beloved father, and going amongst strangers; that dear father too on the point of facing an enemy, conspired to render her feelings most painful,—as she stepped into the vessel that was to convey her from him who had watched over her infancy with the tenderest care. It was now necessary she should be separated from him, his country calling on him to fulfil the duties of his station, which had for some time been neglected, to attend the sick bed of a wife he tenderly loved.

Captain Courteney was in the navy, and one of those kind of characters all must love,—generous, noble, and humane, his heart was ever open to the distresses of his fellow-creatures. His daughter was his first consideration; on her he lavished every kindness and indulgence,

and brought her up with the nicest care. After she was supplied, the overplus of his income was freely given to every child of adversity. He had married early in life a very beautiful girl, a friend of his sister's, whose beauty and worth were her only recommendations.—There was one wanting to recommend her to the favour of his family, who fully appreciated their own consequence, being one of the first respectability in the neighbourhood they resided in. Their father expected all his sons would bring riches to his house; and, when he found his second son, George, had disappointed his expectations, he cast him off for ever. George had too high a spirit to cringe, or sue for forgiveness, well knowing by his marriage he had not brought disgrace on his family, nor had he infringed any of the duties a reasonable parent had a right to expect from a child.

Captain Courteney's wife was the

eldest daughter of a respectable clergyman; but money, that grand reconciler, and too highly esteemed good, was wanting, and the want of it made old Mr. Courteney inexorable; for, to be accomplished and amiable was of no avail. She had been the playfellow and companion of his daughter; the same masters had instructed both. George Courteney had been accustomed to play with her, as a child, when he came from school at the different vacations. After an absence of eight years at sea, in which time he had served as midshipman, and was made lieutenant, previous to his joining a fine frigate he was appointed to, he paid a visit to Cliffdale, where he saw the improved charms and mind of Louisa Somers, whose heart he soon engaged, and, without considering consequences, prevailed on the too-susceptible Louisa to elope with him, well knowing his father would not consent.

With a steady, confidential servant they set off for Guernsey, where they were united.

For some years after his marriage he followed his profession with honour and emolument; and greater would have ensued, had he not been induced in early life to relinquish it to attend the declining health of his wife. For some years she lingered in a distressing state of debility, brought on by her too keen sensibility; feeling that she had been the cause of estranging him from his family, preyed incessantly on her spirits, and proved to them both, that an act of disobedience seldom gives unalloyed pleasure.

Captain Courteney's sister, who had invariably befriended them, had for some time discontinued her correspondence, without assigning any cause. She had some years after they married visited a friend in Ireland, where she had married

very well; and after that period had noticed them both by the kindest attention. This was always a source of comfort and solace to Mrs. Courteney in all her afflictions. Letter after letter did she write, demanding the cause of her silence; but receiving no answer, offended pride and wounded feelings, fell upon her spirits, which injured her constitution, and not all the tenderness of the best of husbands could dissipate it.

Captain Courteney's elder brother, who had now possession of the family estate, by the death of his father, just before this period, adhered too closely to his opinions and resentments to notice his amiable relations. All these considerations shook the delicate frame of Mrs. Courteney, and she was taken from a world, wherein she had found very little happiness, but in the affection of her excellent husband, and the engaging prattle of her infant daughter. She

died at an early age, leaving her darling child to the care of that husband, who, for three long years, had smoothed the bed of sickness, and softened that of death. After he lost his estimable wife, his whole life was devoted to the care and improvement of his Louisa. Masters of every kind were procured for her, himself attending to her morals and disposition.

Educated in the school of the world, he endeavoured to convey to her young mind some of the experience he had learned; at the same time he would often say, he would rather she was imposed on in life, than suffer the ingenuousness of her nature to be cramped by suspicion. The elegant precepts and information which flowed from his lips, served to enlarge her mind, without taking from it any of its simplicity; and on her attaining her seventeenth year she was all the fondest parent could wish.

It was at this period the exigency of public affairs called on Captain Courteney to assist his brother officers in defending his country. Reluctantly he gave up the society and tuition of his Louisa; but to leave her in an unprotected state was impossible, and he had no one to whom he could, with safety and comfort, entrust this darling child so well as to his sister, who had ever been the friend of his youth, particularly so of his wife, ever kindly mediating for them with her father, whenever it was in her power to do so, though without effect, he retaining the utmost rancour against his son to the day of his death, not bequeathing him a six-pence; but leaving to his daughter ten thousand pounds on her marriage, provided her husband met her uncle's approbation.

To this highly-valued sister he was determined to apply and claim her protection; begged to know what had been

the cause of her not having noticed them for so many years, and to assure her of his continued affection, though she had apparently given him up. He told her all he asked for his Louisa was her notice and care, as the fortune of war had made him master of more than competency. In answer to this letter, as soon as he could, he received a most friendly one, with every assurance of kindness, informing him she had repeatedly written both to him and his wife, and that she was much astonished her letters had never been answered: that only one letter had she received during the period he had mentioned, and that was written by a domestic, acquainting her of the death of Mrs. Courteney, and that Capt. Courteney had gone to some remote part of England, with his daughter, no one could tell where; that she had applied to her elder brother, but in vain, as

he preserved an obstinate silence respecting them.

She expressed true delight on hearing from her brother, and the prospect of seeing her beloved niece, and having her an inmate in her house, afforded her real pleasure. She offered herself to go to England for her, but Capt. Courteney would not give this trouble, as he purposed accompanying her to Holyhead, and then to entrust her to the care of a domestic he had the greatest reliance on, having lived with them ever since Louisa was an infant, and indeed had the charge of her.

Great was the struggle Capt. Courteney felt, on parting from all that remained of his beloved wife; but honour called on him to fulfil the duties of his station, and honour in the breast of Capt. Courteney, bore down every other feeling. As he imprinted the farewel

paternal kiss on the cheek of his lovely child, a tear wetted that burning cheek, which acted like magic on the frame of Louisa, who trembling, dispirited, and sinking under her feelings, hung almost lifeless on the shoulder of her father; this was too much for him, he hurried her into the boat, that was to convey her to the packet, repeated an hundred charges of care to her attendant, and with precipitate steps left them.

The company on board were of the most pleasant kind, and in some measure beguiled the sorrow she felt on parting from her father. The party consisted of Lord and Lady Doneraile, a very lively girl, their niece, an Oxonian, a friend of theirs, who was going to spend some little time in Dublin, and two ladies who were very well acquainted with Louisa's aunt, Mrs. Connolly; they soon fell into very pleasant conversation, and when they found to whom she was going—

"You are going," said Mrs. Brownlow, "to reside with one of the most amiable characters we have in Dublin; to real worth is united, in Mrs. Connolly, all that polish of manners, which must ever captivate the senses, and rivet the affections, when we know that it proceeds from the goodness of her heart." This panegyric on her aunt dissipated the gloom that had been fast stealing over her spirits, from the dread of meeting one she was totally unacquainted with, fearing her manner might be austere. Her countenance brightened as Mrs. Brownlow continued to sound the praises of her aunt, telling her they were intimate friends.

By the time they drew near Dublin, with the refreshment of a little sleep, her spirits were sufficiently roused to enjoy the delightful scene that presents itself on entering the bay. This scene was so picturesque and lively, that she

felt assured she should be happy; and the boat which conveyed her to the shore carried a much lighter heart than the one, that had taken her on board. The buoyant spirits of youth prevents the possessor from long dwelling on painful subjects; ever hoping, ever looking forward to some new delight, the sad past is forgotten in the dawning prospect of the future; it is far different when age and disappointment has furrowed the cheek with sorrow; religion then can only cheer the sad mourner, and soften affliction.

With spirits lightened, but not without a palpitating heart, Louisa appeared before her aunt, that relation she never remembered to have seen, as she was quite in infancy when Mrs. Connolly left England. She flew with open arms to receive the child of a beloved brother, and the first embrace Louisa felt as if it had been a maternal one, Mrs. Connolly

having one of those happy manners that conciliate at once: to a tone of voice the most soothing, was added a strong resemblance of Capt. Courteney, his steadiness of manner, with the gentleness of a female; and she seemed one who, having known troubles, was softened, not subdued, by them. Again and again she folded her niece in her arms, and assured her, she should find a mother. At that endearing sound the eyes of Louisa were suffused with tears, those of her amiable aunt caught the infection, and she wiped the drop away, which fell to the memory of her old friend and play-fellow saying, "My child, you are come to rouse your spirits, not lower them. Allow me to lead the way to your apartments, which, in future, you are to consider as your home; it is impossible to be thoroughly comfortable, until you are domesticated; you must feel that you are not a visitor, but become a

part of my family. The rooms I have appropriated to your use, are intended for your comfort; and, as the best friends may tire of being constantly together, you will there find resources to diversify the scene, as well as to improve the mind."

She then led the way to a most complete library, furnished with histories, travels, tours, and select poetry, a grand piano, and a harp to relieve the mind from too intense study. Adjoining this charming room was a very good-sized dressing-room, and bed-room. Louisa was delighted, and most grateful for the charming arrangement her aunt had made for her. Earnestly did she wish her dear father could but see how her comforts had been attended to; the flush of pleasure glowed on her cheek, and the tear of gratitude glistened in her fine blue eyes.

"Ah! my dear aunt, you are too good,

and will spoil me, I fear.' "Don't be alarmed, my love, as yet you only see the fair side, and are not aware how much I may scold you. If, after residing a twelvemonth with me, you are as well pleased as you are at this day, I will then receive your thanks. Happiness is deceitful, Louisa, and we must not trust to appearances; I have enjoyed all this before you, and yet have been miserable; your case, I hope, will not be a similar one, but that you will always enjoy the good of this life without alloy." A momentary gloom spread itself over the soft features of Mrs. Connolly, but soon disappeared, when she smiling said, "My dear girl will begin to think she is to live on appearances—but let us go to the dining-room, for I am sure you must need some refreshment."

They then entered a good sized room, where a neat, elegant dinner was placed on the table. The charming manner

and conversation of her aunt took from Louisa all restraint, and they arose from the dining-table mutually pleased with each other; and Louisa's mind turned in grateful recollection to that indulgent parent, who had placed her in so charming an asylum.

"For this day," said Mrs. Connolly, "I am shut out from all my friends, that my Louisa may have time to recover herself from the effects of a sea voyage, which, though ever so short, sadly unhinges the constitution. I have often experienced it, and can feel for the unpleasant languor it occasions." They spent the day in rational conversation, and Louisa felt, that any company would indeed have been an intrusion, so much was she pleased with the manner and pleasant information of Mrs. Connolly. She found that her habit and manner of living had lately been very retired, but she said Louisa would be the means of

making her quite gay; for that her friends would never forgive her, if she did not suffer her to go into public, and she should think it necessary to attend her, for she felt the importance of the charge her brother had entrusted her with. Louisa hoped she would not enter into more gaiety than was pleasant to her, "for I assure you, my dear aunt, I feel happy with you, and were I never to go into public, it would not give me a pang." "That may be, my love, but my situation in life, as well as your own, requires it: we must, in some instances, conform to the usages of the world. Amusements, moderately enjoyed, are of service, and it is natural for youth to join in them. How much you remind me of your mother, in your manner and appearance! She was just your age when she was married to my brother; like you she was timid: she would not have had resolution to elope, had it not

been for my advice. I have ever owned myself the principal cause of her taking that rash step, and have often repented that I did influence her; but my motive was a good one; I saw they were sincerely attached to each other, and I was not aware then of my father's disposition. Did you ever see your grandfather, Louisa?" "No, madam, never, that I recollect." "Poor dear child," said Mrs. Connolly, "from me you shall meet with that tenderness and affection, which, I fear, my conduct may have deprived you of. I shall now have it in my power to make you some reparation for the injury and anxiety in which the giddiness of my advice involved your amiable mother."

Louisa could hardly suppose that her aunt had ever been imprudent or inconsiderate, for she appeared to her now all that was good and perfect. But Mrs. Connolly (when Miss Courteney) had an amazing flow of spirits, which had never

been checked by education; her mother dying when she was young, she had soon become the mistress of her father's family, who indulged her in that volatility so natural to her. Her own good understanding, and the different trials she had experienced, had softened her disposition, and made her the interesting character Louisa found her.

They retired early to rest, and the next morning Louisa felt well composed and happy. After breakfast, Mrs. Connolly proposed a drive round the circular road, to give her niece an idea of the size and beauty of the city, which it surrounded. Different parts of the road presenting some charming views, delighted Louisa, whose mind was ever open to receive impressions of pleasure.

Mrs. Connolly was recognised by many of her acquaintance in the course of the drive. One gentleman stopped the carriage to speak to her; she introduced him

to her niece, and he begged to know if they were to be at home in the evening, as he intended to have the honour of waiting on them. Mrs. Connolly said it would afford her much pleasure to see him, as she wished to make him acquainted with her niece; who bowing to him, he said, "To express the truth, my visit is to her, having heard of her from some acquaintance of mine, who came in the same packet with her, and their account is so favourable, that I feel a degree of impatience to place her on the list of my acquaintance." With a gracious smile from both ladies, the carriage moved on.

"Mr. Tarleton," said Mrs. Connolly, "is one of my oldest acquaintances; at his house I first saw Mr. Connolly." A half-suppressed sigh led Louisa to fancy it arose to the memory of a beloved and regretted husband, and she wished to change the subject; but Mrs. Connolly continued—"he is, as he has ever been,

my friend and counsellor; his abilities are of the first rate, and most entertaining; for he is not one of those learned men, who think women beneath their notice. He has often told me, that he flies to their society, as a relaxation, and the most pleasing one he can have, from business. Law occupies all his mornings, being very highly esteemed in that line, and as much estimated in private life for his virtues, as he is looked up to in his profession. He is a widower, and has one son, a most charming young man: when quite a boy, he took a fancy he would be in the army or navy; this his father resolutely opposed, and persisted in sending him to the Temple, which he now condemns himself for: it never answers to force the inclinations of children; the parent who does so, opens a wide field of repentance for himself. It is, indeed, astonishing that Mr. Tarleton's judgment, which is in general so correct, should, in

this instance, have been defective; he now sees his error; but, alas! too late. He was at the Temple, and wrote to his father, to say he was determined not to follow the law, and that his intention was to go to India.

"Mr. Tarleton, in a state of distraction, set off immediately for England; but by the time he reached London, the India fleet had sailed, and no trace could he discover of his son, who had taken every precaution not to be found out.—Mr. Tarleton's affliction has been most violent; he is now looking forward with hope to the arrival of a fleet from India, which, he trusts, will bring him some account of his son. This distressing circumstance, at times, throws a melancholy into his manner, which is very affecting; but he endeavours to divert his attention as much as possible, and to wear away the time, until his son's return, which he intends using every means

in his power to effect, when he knows where he is."

This account of Mr. Tarleton occupied the time, until the carriage stopped at their own door; when, on looking at their watches, they found they had just time to dress for dinner. Early in the evening Mr. Tarleton joined them; and Louisa found all that her aunt had said in his favour was perfectly just. He accosted her as an old acquaintance, saying, she must always consider him as such; for he had known her family so many years, he almost fancied himself a part of it. Louisa was delighted; she felt no longer a stranger, but joined in the conversation with that sweet timidity, which, under the direction of good sense, is ever so captivating in a female. The conversation turned on the dissipation of the times.

CHAP. II.

"I THINK," said Mr. Tarleton, "that although we inveigh against the folly of the present day, yet, in all ages it has been nearly the same; the depravity of the world has been generally lamented, and ever will be. Pleasure is the theme, to attain which, character and morality are too often sacrificed by its votaries. But this, my young friend will know only by report; with so good and wise a guardian, she will escape all the snares that are spread for such like her, young, artless, and beautiful. What, my dear Mrs. Connolly, can be more destructive to female prudence and propriety, than the present nocturnal parties * established

* These parties really existed at that period.

in this gay city, for the winter? I mean the romping routs, where a set of young people meet, for no other purpose than to indulge in all kind of wild pranks.—Ease is the order of the night. I have been told, by a young friend of mine, that no children, just emerged from school, can be more riotous than this assemblage; —and is it for this, daughters are educated?

"I declare, were my dear George at this time with me, the dread of his forming an attachment for one of those gay females, would take much from the pleasure I should have in his society."—"But surely, Sir," said Louisa, "a man of sentiment, or even common reflection, would not be inclined to like a female of the class you are speaking of."—"Alas! Miss Courteney, I am too well acquainted with the weakness of human nature, not to tremble for it, in the early stages of life. George is heir to a fortune, that

would make him an object to many; and some of the first families in Dublin might not think him unworthy their alliance. I do not say this from vanity, but from the knowledge that, after me, his fortune will be considerable; for, philosophize as we may, that dirty dross will have weight."—Ah! thought Louisa, that heart must be dross, indeed, that would be influenced by money in the choice of a partner for life! This was a subject on which she had never thought much; but whenever she did think of it, she pictured to herself the happiness of her father and mother, and formed not a wish beyond their situation, whose time was ever spent in tranquillity; not wishing for foreign aid to augment their happiness, all being composed within themselves. And she unconsciously heaved a sigh to the memory of those days that were fled for ever!

Mrs. Connolly, observing Louisa's abstraction, and that she had fallen into a reverie, said, in an arch manner, she was waiting to hear her opinion; for she was sure, from the solemnity of her countenance, she was planning a reform. This roused her, and she replied, "No, indeed, my dear madam, I am not; but I have been thinking how unfit I am for a Dublin life.—Mr. Tarleton has quite alarmed me; for I am a novice in the customs and manners of the world, and may be drawn into its errors by my ignorance to avoid them."—"That very ingenuousness, and weak reliance on yourself," said Mr. Tarleton, "will ever be your guard. But you need not be alarmed; Mrs. Connolly's acquaintance and habits are more rational than the class I have been speaking of; and although you may occasionally meet with them, you will not be obliged to join in their absurdities or improprieties."

"How well," said Mrs. Connolly, "has the amiable Lady Conyers conducted herself: early married to a man of large fortune, indulged in every wish of her heart, she never formed one that was not rational." "Ah," replied Mr. Tarleton, "but she was an Englishwoman; and it must be allowed they have more domestic qualifications than our Irish, though in quickness of talents they do not surpass them; certainly, our females have more of the French in their composition. Now, would any of these abominable parties I have been speaking of, have been formed by an Englishwoman; and knowing that the person who holds these midnight revels, is wife to one of our first characters in public as well as private life, we must regret that his influence is not sufficient to withhold her from amusements so degrading to the female character.—There is the honorable Mrs. Stafford, with beauty and wit to charm; but want of

principle throws a blemish over her attractive graces."

"I fear, my dear Sir, we shall give my niece a disgust to our Irish women, by speaking of the worst part of them; we must try to extenuate their faults. The honorable lady you allude to, has but a narrow income to struggle with, accompanied by all the pride of family. Vanity and necessity in women too often lead to their ruin."

"My good friend, you are too lenient in your opinion of the lady in question. A licentiousness of disposition may be added to her other incitements to do ill."

"The first circles have the brightest example in our present lady lieutenant," said Mrs. Connolly; "and it could be scarcely supposed, there was a female breast hardened enough to wound hers. In private life, she is all that is feminine, kind, and considerate; in public, graceful, gay, yet discreet."

"Well," said Mr. Tarleton, "you have proved the truth of my assertion; for there again is an Englishwoman. But now we have discussed these important points, what say you to a little music, for I am sure Miss Courteney plays; and as we have been inclined to find fault with the world, or at least the fashionable part of it, she must harmonize our feelings. There is melody in her voice; and I am certain, if she does not play, she sings." "I think," said Mrs. Connolly, "from the specimen she gave me yesterday, that I may say, without partiality, she excels in both. And I find her father has been as attentive to that branch of her education, as he has to every other."

Louisa said she should be happy to play to such indulgent hearers; and she acquitted herself in a manner to delight both her auditors.

Mr. Tarleton was perfectly charmed;

he was passionately fond of music; his wife had played remarkably well, and he never heard it since her death, without being much affected; he was moved almost to tears; which Louisa perceiving, she changed the tune from a plaintive to a gay one, and as soon as she had finished it, rose from her seat. Mr. Tarleton saw through her delicacy, and rewarded her by appearing cheerful. He told them they must expect visitors in the morning, as Lady Doneraile and party purposed calling.

Louisa was much pleased with Mr. Tarleton; she could perceive the sadness in his manner, which her aunt had mentioned, and which was not to be wondered at; but she saw that he struggled against it: she truly felt for him. She judged from her own feelings, now she was separated from her father, what Mr. Tarleton's must be, and she exerted all her powers of pleasing to amuse and di-

vert his attention; and was happy to find they succeeded.

Louisa wondered how any son could desert such a parent; and these ideas brought forcibly to her mind the recollection of her own. She had written him a few hasty lines on her arrival, and anxiously waited his answer; forgetting that letters at that distance must be more tardy than her wishes, for wishes, at best, are but unavailing. The ardent hope, or anxious sigh, cannot bring us nearer to the accomplishment of our desires; but it is in human nature to indulge in them; for if they give to the mind only temporary comfort, who can forego the delightful delusion! It stole over the senses of Louisa, and gave her lively hopes that the wishes of her heart might soon be fulfilled. And her aunt, on meeting her in the morning, thought that although on first seeing her, she had appeared very handsome, yet that the

increased glow of health added, or rather gave, a lustre to her other charms.

As Mr. Tarleton had intimated to them that Lady Doneraile was to call, they did not go out; and Louisa, who had not arranged any thing since her arrival, with the assistance of her maid, unpacked and placed every thing in order before the visiting hour. Just as she had finished, she received a summons to go down stairs, where she found her fellow passengers, Lady Doneraile, Miss Maude, and Mr. Spenser, the young Oxonian, all of whom were delighted to see her. Miss Maude, with a volubility that almost overpowered her, said, "My dear creature, I have been dying to see you; but my aunt thought it was not etiquette to call before; and I have been half dead with impatience to ask you how you like Dublin? When you go to the Castle? Whether you go to the next Rotunda ball? But no; you will not, of course, be seen in

public, until you are presented. Our Lady Lieutenant has as much goodness as she has money, which is a pretty large share; but of course, being English, you know all about that."—"And if she did not, my dear Caroline, you would not leave Miss Courteney long in ignorance," said Lady Doneraile; "your volubility quite overpowers her. But you must pardon her, Miss Courteney; and when you find her troublesome, tell her of it; for I can assure you, my niece's good humour is equal to her loquacity; and in saying this, you will all own I allow her a tolerable share."

"Not more than she deserves," said Mrs. Connolly.

"Well, ladies, if you have quite decided on my manner, character, &c. I shall proceed; for I will not be cheated out of the chat I purposed to have with Miss Courteney. I must, in the first place, tell you, that Mr. Spenser has

done nothing but sigh, since he came over: on the other side of the water, he was as gay as myself. For these last three days, he has been quite in the dismals, nor have I seen a smile on his countenance till this morning. Lady Doneraile told him we were to call on Mrs. Connolly, when he eagerly begged to attend us. Now, could it be curiosity to see Mrs. Connolly? No, surely not; for men, you know, are never curious. Why, then, it brings it to this—that Miss Courteney was the attraction."

Louisa blushed very deeply; — Mr. Spenser looked confused, at the rattle of his friend; but said, "And who, that has ever had the honour of seeing Miss Courteney once, but must be anxious to have that happiness repeated? Even you, Caroline, have just owned you were dying with impatience to see her again. Lady Doneraile has been full of her praises;

and I have silently felt all that you have both so fully expressed."

" My niece is much obliged," said Mrs. Connolly, " by these kind expressions of regard ; but I fear, if all are so partial to her, it will require all her good sense to keep off the approach of vanity, which steals imperceptibly on us ; but I hope she will be proof against it ; as I should wish, when I am called on to give up my charge, to return her to her father as artless and unaffected as I received her."

" You may think as you please," said Miss Maude, " but I will corrupt her ;" so saying, with an arch smile, she drew Louisa to the other side of the room.— Mr. Spenser followed, and they entered into a lively conversation. Louisa, who was naturally cheerful, without being noisy, pleased her new acquaintance with the liveliness and native wit of her conversation ; she was timid to excess, and

never spoke, but the mantling blushes indicated the extreme sensibility of her mind;—a mind, which, from childhood, had been in a state of improvement, but yet diffident of its own powers. When speaking of public places, Louisa thought she should like them, but that really her life had hitherto been so retired, she could not tell whether they would afford her that pleasure they did the rest of the world; for that in the country, with her father, she had only visited the neighbouring families, and gone to private dances, but never to a public one.

Miss Maude gave a violent scream.—"Never in public, my dear girl!—You petrify me. Why, really you have no time to lose. Mr. Spenser affects to dislike public places; but I do not despair of making something of you both. I shall certainly have a great deal of business on my hands, bringing you out.—Your aunt may give respectability, but

I shall give you ton—dear, delightful ton, that charming something, not to be described; that polish, only to be met with in the regions of fashion and high life." So saying, she started up, and running up to her aunt, "Come, my dear madam, are you ready? Do you remember we have more calls to make this morning?" "Indeed I do," said Lady Doneraile, "and thought you had forgotten it." "Oh no; I am quite at your service."

"I hope," said Louisa, "you will not forget your promise of fitting me for the beau monde of this gay city; for I shall not be able to appear in public, till you have arranged my manner."—"No, certainly not, my dear, and I will lose no time; so that, my dear Mrs. Connolly, you may expect to be troubled with me very often." Lady Doneraile hoped she should soon see Mrs. Connolly and her niece. Mr. Spenser handed them to their

carriage. "Won't you come in, Charles?" said Miss Maude. "I know you think it unmanly; but come, step in for once; take my advice in this instance, and I will give you more as I go along."

When they were gone, Mrs. Connolly said, "That is a good-humoured rattle; if any thing, her aunt is too indulgent to her. But Miss Maude's vivacity is so tempered by good humour, that it takes the imagination by surprise, and keeps it captive: it is impossible not to like her. Her claims on Lady Doneraile are, indeed, very great; as she was left an orphan by a dearly loved sister, who had little but her blessing to leave her. The worldly part of society condemns Lady Doneraile, for keeping her in the style she does, as she has no fortune; and Lord Doneraile's sons inheriting all his, leaves only present support in her power. But if she does err in this instance, it is the most excusable of all errors, being founded on

affection, and nurtured by the tenderness of her heart." Louisa wondered any one could condemn conduct so natural, dictated by feeling, and sanctioned by consanguinity. But she had yet to learn the sordid maxims of the world; she had yet to know, that feeling must sometimes be checked by prudence. It is true, her father had often told her so, but she had never seen him practise it; for, with the characteristic generosity of his profession, he generally gave way to the impulses of his heart.

These reflections led her to think of her highly-esteemed parent; and she felt truly disappointed that the postman had passed without bringing her a letter. Mrs. Connolly told her to recollect, that no time had as yet elapsed to cause her uneasiness; it might appear long from being the first separation; "but you will," continued she, "insensibly become accustomed to his absence. Time wears off the keen

edge of every affliction, and evils, which, at a distance, we think impossible to be borne, when they arrive, are often supported with more fortitude, than we thought possible."——" True, my dear aunt; I think I could myself support great evils with more composure than I could small. For instance, the delay of a letter, when you expect one, is harassing to your spirits, and you do not make up your mind to combat with your feelings, on so trifling an occasion; and yet, for the moment, it appears a real unhappiness."—" Well do I know, my dear Louisa, the feelings you now wish to delineate; for, in the bitterness of woe and disappointment, have I felt them all!

CHAP. III.

"It is my intention to give you an account of my past life, and you will then cease to be astonished, if I at times appear low-spirited or melancholy. I fear I cannot relate all that I have suffered, but I will write it for your inspection. Some part of it may prove a useful lesson to you, and if I at all benefit the child of my beloved brother, by my sad experience, I shall think my sufferings have not been quite in vain." As she spoke, the same gloom which had occasionally taken possesion of her features, again overspread them. Louisa felt herself affected almost to tears. Her aunt saw the lucid drop trembling in her eye, and with her usual command over herself, dispersed her own melancholy, and re-

gained her accustomed composure. "We will dwell no more on dismals, my dear Louisa, but look forward with hope that you may soon hear from your father. In the mean time, we must turn our attention to the scene around us. It is wrong to suffer retrospection or anticipation to sadden the present moment—we must think of friends who are within our reach."

"Mrs. Brownlow has sent to say, that she is too much indisposed to call on you, but hopes to see us this evening—she is the lady who gave you so favourable an account of me. Louisa was delighted at the idea of renewing the acquaintance with her. And as they went there, Mrs. Connolly told her, that Mrs. Brownlow and Mr. Tarleton were in similar situations, both being deprived of the society of their children, and both keenly feeling the affliction.

Mrs. Brownlow's daughter had eloped,

about three years before, from a boarding-school in Bath. On her coming of age, she was to inherit a large property, left by her father, who had been some years dead; he left her a ward of Chancery; and there was no doubt but they would secrete themselves until she was entitled to claim her fortune. The most distressing part of the story was, that Mrs. Brownlow could not form the most distant idea of the person she had married, and this added to her unhappiness.

Mrs. Brownlow was much affected on the entrance of Louisa; she reminded her forcibly of her daughter. Her appearance had interested her on board the packet. After spending a social hour with her, they parted. Mrs. Connolly promised that Louisa should visit her often; indeed she felt happy, that any opportunity offered of alleviating the distress of Mrs. Brownlow. "The losing an infant," said Mrs. Connolly, "appears

to a mother her first affliction; but what is that, to being bereft of the comfort and cheering society of the child your kindness has cherished, your care protected; who, after all the anxiety her infancy and youth occasioned, is torn from the sheltering arms of her parents, and has committed her happiness to the care of one, who may be unfit to guard it. Oh! my dear Louisa, how anxiously do I hope that your love and duty may never be at variance, but that in the delightful fulfilment of the one, no cloud may obscure, no command be inimical to the perfect indulgence of the other." The affectionate warmth of her manner, in speaking this, sunk deep into the heart of Louisa. The sweet league of friendship, and reciprocal regard, seemed from that moment to be established—no reserve existed.

Mrs. Connolly felt a new existence; since the arrival of her niece, her trou-

bles seemed to be forgotten. She had before diverted her care by acts of charity. Her benevolence, which was active and well-conducted, kept her constantly employed. The mendicant, who supplicated at her door, was never spurned from it by a high-bred pampered servant. She felt for the destitute state of the poor in Ireland, and never turned in disgust from their poverty and rags, but investigated their situations, found out the habitations of wretchedness, and learnt whether they were impostors or not. Hardly a day, but some object claimed her assistance, and if found to be deserving, they were always relieved with a liberal hand. Nor did her charity consist in the mere giving of alms. A gentle allowance for the failings of others, and kind considerations for the frailties of human nature, tempered and chastened her conversation, which gave her a power over the mind almost irre-

sistible. Louisa felt with such a monitor she could never err. The perfections which had ripened into maturity in the mind of Mrs. Connolly, were now in embryo in the bosom of Louisa; occasion only was wanting to call them forth, for there the finer feelings glowed with all the energy of youth.

The time was now occupied in receiving and returning visits, and the necessary preparations for appearing at the next drawing-room. Miss Maude occasionally called to give her advice, and every time Louisa saw her, she felt more attached.

Mr. Tarleton frequently visited them; he called one morning, having received a letter from a near relation, the Hon. Mr. Morrice, begging he would apologize to Mrs. Connolly, for his not having called on her before he left Dublin, and inform her, that he had been hurried into the county of Meath, to visit

his brother, the Earl of Rossmore, who had been taken dangerously ill. Mrs. Connolly said, she was happy to have his absence accounted for, as she had much wondered she had not seen him since the arrival of her niece. She considered Mr. Morrice almost as a part of Mr. Tarleton's family, and she had been accustomed to receive from him, and the Earl of Rossmore, the most regular and gratifying attention, and had felt anxious to introduce Louisa to Mr. Morrice. Mr. Tarleton was pleased to find Louisa appeared so much gratified by all that she had seen since her arrival in Dublin. It must be an insensible heart indeed, that does not receive with warmth and gratitude the hospitality of the Irish. Louisa felt it in all its force; it filled up the vacuity in her bosom, which the separation from her father had occasioned. She hailed it as the land of friendship and social feelings, and only wished for

the presence of her dear father to make her happiness complete.

At length the postman's rap at the door, (which never fails to agitate the mind of those who are expecting letters) roused Louisa from a serious conversation she was holding with her aunt. In the next instant a letter was brought to her; with eagerness she broke the seal, and found it was the long-wished-for one from Capt. Courteney. He told her that, after arranging every thing at his house, he had repaired to Plymouth to take command of his ship, but that, previous to his leaving Somersetshire, he had discovered the infamous person, who had kept all his sister's letters from him, and that it pained him to say, that person had been instigated by his father, who had ever been jealous of their affection, and wished to punish him, by depriving him of that consolation. He gave a clear account of the manner of his find-

ing it out, and concluded his letter with blessings to his Louisa, and good advice, saying, he would write again before he sailed.

It was a satisfaction to Mrs. Connolly, that he had found out the source of his not having heard from her, as it took all suspicion of unkindness from her conduct. Louisa's mind felt more at ease, now that she had heard from her father. She readily complied with her aunt's wish of presenting her at the next drawing-room. The day arrived that was to introduce her to the fashionable world; she felt all the timidity natural to a person who had never been in public, and this formidable exhibition appeared to her a great undertaking. But though timid, she had a proper idea of her own consequence, which took from her that bashfulness, which too often appears awkward. She found, when at the Castle, that she had not any thing to

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alarm her. The easy and amiable manners of the Lady-Lieutenant claimed the partiality of all. She particularly noticed Louisa, whose beauty and soft elegance engaged the attention of the whole drawing-room, and there was a general buz of who is she? Her cheeks were dyed with deep blushes, from the murmur of admiration her presence created. Mrs. Connolly saw, with fond pride, the favourable reception Louisa met with, and she was herself received with the greatest delight by all her friends, who were happy she had now an inducement for mixing again in the world, in those scenes where she had once shone in all the gaiety of youth and beauty. Time, it was true, had taken from her the brilliancy of her charms, but the graces of her manner, and the charm of her conversation still remained.

On their return home, Mrs. Connolly could not withhold from her niece the

pleasure she had felt at her appearance and manner. "I have to thank you," she said, "for the very elegant propriety with which you have this day conducted yourself. I should have supposed my Louisa had been bred at court, instead of in a retired village in Somersetshire, and under the direction of a sailor." Louisa was highly gratified by these encomiums; they were more grateful to her heart than all the applause she had met with at the Castle. She remarked on the different persons she had seen, and her aunt gave her an insight into the characters she had particularly noticed. The appearance of the Hon. Mrs. Stafford had struck her; she had heard her characterized by Mr. Tarleton, and she felt inclined to accuse him of too much acrimony in his opinion of her, which expressing to her aunt, she told her she must suspend her judgment until she had seen more of her. Louisa hardly

thought it possible, that so fair a form could cover any deceit or imperfection. A stranger to all guile herself, she could not suspect it in another; her heart was the seat of purity and innocence; unhackneyed in the ways of the world, she thought every female breast must resemble her own. Little did she imagine that when design and craft take possession of the bosom of a female, they are more subtle than in a male, the passions which give rise to it in one sex, being more violent than in the other; but Mrs. Connolly assured her she had ever found it so.

Louisa, full of reflection, retired to rest; her mind was amused with all she had seen, but it was not so composed as when her amusement had arisen from more quiet pleasure.

Brilliant as the scene had been, and much as her vanity might have been flattered by the loud praise that sur-

rounded her, it served no other purpose than to make her thoughts fondly recur to her father. She dedicated the next morning to writing to him, having promised to send him a faithful account of the manner of passing her time, indeed, all her transactions and feelings; for she had ever been accustomed to consider him as her friend, and began her letter as if addressing one.

"Your letter, my dear father, afforded the most heart-felt pleasure to your Louisa. Unaccustomed to be absent from you, or without your immediate council, my heart feels alone, though surrounded by numbers. The kindness of my aunt is all I could wish, and more than I had a right to expect,—it is maternal fondness, with the endearing sympathy of a sister. I can never be sufficiently grateful to my dear father, for placing me in so charming a situation. And it shall be my study to deserve my

aunt's kind attention and protection. How much do I grieve that my angelic mother, through treachery, should have been so long deprived of such a friend, for theirs were congenial minds.

"My aunt's society is all well chosen, and I am sure I shall be as happy with her as it is possible for me to be whilst separated from you. Although the life I pass here, is very different from the tranquil scenes of Cliffdale, yet, left to my choice, I should certainly prefer the latter. We are delighted you have discovered the infamous cause of my aunt's apparent neglect. How little did we expect, that the person you and my mother placed so much confidence in, could have been so base. You have often warned me against the degeneracy of human nature; never having met with it, I almost thought my dear father had judged too severely—forgive me the supposition.—I should have known that

you, my dear monitor, could not err. Oh! that you were always to be near your child, to guide her erring steps. I have promised not to complain, and must allow that, whilst absent from you, I have every thing besides to make me happy. Farewel, my beloved father; that you may be preserved from peril and danger, is the constant and ardent prayer of your affectionate daughter."

She went down stairs to ask her aunt if she had any commands before she sealed the letter, but Mrs. Connolly saying she had written to her brother, Louisa, folding up her letter, was going out of the room, when a violent rap at the door arrested her steps, as, in passing through the hall, she must meet with whatever company it might happen to be. She therefore retired to a distant part of the room with the letter in her hand.

CHAP. IV.

THE door was immediately thrown open, and Mr. Waley was announced. He flew up to Mrs. Connolly with an air of gaiety, taking her hand, said he was delighted to see her, that he was just returned from a walk through Wales with his friend Mr. Cust. "But I hear, Mrs. Connolly, you have the most captivating niece"—Before he had finished the word, he saw Louisa, and appeared as much confused as an impudent young man of fashion could be—he stammered something to Mrs. Connolly, who introduced him. He walked up to her as an old acquaintance, and addressed her. There was an air of gay good humour about him, that prevented her being angry, with what, in another person, she would

have considered familiarity; but the peculiar elegance in his manner, made him not only tolerable, but to many appear pleasant."

"Really," said Mrs. Connolly, "I am obliged to you for this very early visit after your return. I find I have hitherto mistaken your character, for I confess, I did not think an old woman had such attractions; for Mr. Waley and even now, I fear, I may not venture to set it down to my own account." "'Pon honour, my dear Mrs. Connolly, you wrong me. Merit, like your's, must be attractive, however matured—have I not always been one of your admirers?—I declare, I prefer your society to any of the insignificant Misses about town. Though a rattle myself, I like a little steadiness in my associates—have I not given a proof of that in selecting Cust for my particular friend?—he is as steady as Old Time." "It is the astonishment of

every one," said Mrs. Connolly, "how he can have patience with such a madcap; it strongly proves the equanimity of his temper." "I declare, Mrs. Connolly, you are too severe on me; it will not work a reform. I see, by the mild expression of Miss Courteney's eyes, that I should improve more under her tuition,—gentle means are best, for I am not incorrigible. Do not, Miss Courteney, believe exactly your good aunt's character of me, for I fear it will be a severe one."

Then, seeing the letter in her hand—"But, perhaps, I am speaking to one whose whole thoughts are devoted to another. That letter may be going to some favourite being at a distance; but whose image is ever near your heart." Louisa could not help laughing at the heroic style and manner this was said in, at the same time feeling confused by the intense manner he looked on her. She

made a move to leave the room, which her aunt observing, said, "My niece wishes to finish her letter, therefore Mr. Waley will, I know, excuse her." He bowed, but looked chagrined—opened the door for her, and when he had shut it, exclaimed, "Cruel Mrs. Connolly, to deprive me so soon of the charming influence of those bright eyes! Do you mean to be so selfish as to keep that bewitching creature from the sight of man? But you may be right, for she would soon set all Dublin in a blaze. I heard of her from my sister, who saw her presented, and I could hardly exist until I called to satisfy my longing curiosity, which has, indeed, been most highly gratified." "So—as I thought," said Mrs. Connolly, "to your curiosity I am indebted for this visit. Great flatterers should have great memories, for they often commit themselves, it being a

species of story-telling which cannot fail of being found out.

" But to be serious, I wish to inquire about your friend Cust, how is he? Why did he not call? Tell him I shall be most happy to see him in Sackville-street." " I will, certainly, my dear Madam, do as you desire me; but I see how it is; steady fellows, like Cust, always get into favour with the ladies; whilst I am considered too great a reprobate. I will learn to be more sly, and, in the hope that the next time I come you may favour me with a longer sight of your charming niece, we will part now on good terms." So saying, he left the room with as much gaiety and velocity as he had entered it; and, skipping through the hall, was at the door before the servant could come to open it.

Mrs. Connolly joined her niece, saying, " I have got rid of my gay beau, and I assure you I am glad of it. I

forwarded your leaving the room, for I fear, were he encouraged, you would find him a troublesome acquaintance. His family were related to Mr. Connolly, and he being the nearest relation in the male line, he entailed his estate on him after me. I understand, from his expensive habits, he has already dipped it in prospect, that he has absolutely been so imprudent as to take up money on it. He aims at notoriety in every thing, drives the finest horses, has the finest house in Dublin, and is determined, when he marries, to have the finest wife, provided that wife can bring him money to supply his present necessities. You are exactly the sort of person he would like to attach himself to, and have the world suppose he was very much enamoured of, new in the fashionable world, with a person and appearance gratifying to his vanity. If I do not check him, he will never cease per-

secuting you." Louisa thanked her for her kind attention, and said she would avoid him as much as possible: "and this, my dear aunt, will be no mortification; for I am sure, from what little I saw of him, he will not be at all to my taste, therefore I shall not have much merit in keeping him at a distance."

Mrs. Connolly proposed going to Clontarf to pay some visits to her friends there, who, she was sure, did not know her niece was with her, and she was anxious to introduce her to them, and to shew her that beautiful village, so much and justly admired. The number of gentlemen's seats, highly embellished, and the situation, by nature so advantageous, fixed Louisa in delightful attention, till they reached the door of Lady Southby, a very intimate friend of Mrs. Connolly's. Louisa was much gratified by her aunt's manner of presenting her. "I bring you, my good friend, my niece,

or rather my dear daughter; already her society has chased away many cares,—my youth seems renewed, and, in planning for her pleasures and amusements, I shall live over my days again." Lady Southby was rejoiced at the renovated spirits of her friend, which had been much sunk.

From Lady Southby's, they called at Mrs. Barnard's, one of the principal houses in the place. Louisa was delighted with this spot, it had all the appearance of perfect retirement, with the advantage of being so near a great city. Mrs. Barnard was at home, and Louisa was struck with her sweet countenance; her face, lovely and animated, promised a great deal; but she soon found, from the trifling turn the conversation took, that her mind was not equal to her person. She had understood from her aunt, that Mrs. Barnard had sweet children, and she requested she might be allowed to

see them. Mrs. Barnard rung the bell, and desired the servant to tell the upper nursery-maid to bring them down stairs. In a few minutes the door opened, and in came four beautiful little cherubs, three girls and a boy. The eldest girl ran up to her mother—"Dear mamma, how happy I am to see you; I have been looking every time the nursery-door opened, thinking I should see my own mamma; but Miss Blagrave told me, that you could not come, as Fidele was so ill.—Ah, there is dear little Fidele!" So saying, she sprang forward, to kiss the dog, that was laying by the fire on a nice cushion. A deep blush tinged the cheeks of Mrs. Barnard, and it must be owned she felt something like shame, in having her indifference so artlessly betrayed by her innocent child. The other sweet children hung about her, "the envied kiss to share." She attended but little to the praises bestowed on them by

Mrs. Connolly and Miss Courteney; her whole attention turned to the little animal; she seemed apprehensive that the rude kiss of the sweet Eliza had hurt her pet. The boy stooped down to notice it, when she desired he would not disturb the poor creature, as his sister had done, and rang the bell to order them to the nursery. The fine blue eyes of Eliza were suffused with tears as she quitted the room, she being considered the aggressor. This Mrs. Barnard took no notice of, but seemed more composed when they were gone.

Shortly after, Mrs. Connolly rose to take her leave, and they were hardly seated in the carriage before Louisa exclaimed, "I did not think that there was in nature a woman who could appear so indifferent to such lovely children! Dear, amiable little creatures, how I longed to press them to my bosom, and cheer their little hearts!"

"They are accustomed to it, poor little things," said Mrs. Connolly, "for, I believe, they are seldom more noticed than they were this morning. Their father is a very sensible, domestic man, and, by his attention, makes up for the indifference of the other parent." "But who," said Louisa, "can make up for the tender care of a mother? There are a thousand nameless attentions that a mother can bestow on children in their infancy, which it is impossible for a father to do. Mine, I am sure, is all goodness, and yet, in my infantine years, how much did I need a mother's fostering care!" "Mr. Barnard is a very superior man," said Mrs. Connolly, "and deserves a better fate; but it was a love match, and what can we say. We are apt to think, that when affection is mutual, happiness must follow; but that is not always the case; indeed, the present in-

stance is a striking example to the contrary."

"But what man, my dear aunt, could continue to love a woman who appears to want the feelings necessary to make our sex valuable?" "No, my dear, it is from a failure in those points, Mrs. Barnard has lost, in some measure, the affection of her husband; for, you see, if it depended on beauty, she has enough to retain him; but, unless esteem has a share in the bond that unites the sexes, mere outward appearance will not keep the affections. Amongst all her failings, however, it must be allowed that the world cannot accuse her of levity; and her rectitude of conduct, in that respect, and unceasing good nature, still keeps a hold on his affections; but she can be no companion to a rational man, her whole thoughts being occupied by dress, pets, and public places;—yet she has many good qualities; her faults arise

from a bad education, and too much indulgence. An only child, brought up by weak parents, she was taught to think only of herself, and not even her lovely children can turn her mind from the trifling bias it has taken."

Louisa could hardly think it possible, that a woman who had so many solid enjoyments in her power, should spend her time in irrational amusements. She thought her aunt must be partial;—that she could not be good-natured;—and she wondered how she could even think her pretty.

On their return home, they found an invitation from the Doneraile's to dine with them on Monday in the following week, and a little note from Miss Maude, saying she should breakfast with them the next morning, as she had some little plans to arrange with Miss Courteney.

Mrs. Brownlow dined with them by invitation; her spirits were much better than when they saw her last. She had heard from her daughter, saying, that she was well and happy, and that she hoped when she came of age, to throw herself at her dear mother's feet, and implore forgiveness. She trusted she would not be inexorable. That she could not discover the place of her retreat till then, as she feared the Lord Chancellor, her father having left her a ward to him. The letter could not at all lead to a discovery of their residence, as it had only the London general-post mark on it; but it cheered Mrs. Brownlow, and gave her new life; she hoped, from the style of her letter, that she was happy, and was determined on waiting with resignation for the time when she might expect again to see her. She was too fondly attached to her daughter not to determine on forgiving her.

CHAP. V.

Mr. Tarleton joined their party in the evening. Ships were shortly expected from India, and the prospect that he might soon hear from his son gave him spirits. Louisa was the delight of them all; her refined sense, and steadiness of manner, made her a companion for the old, as her various attractions and bewitching beauty, made her sought after by the young. Her harp was brought into the dining-room, and she was amusing them with its dulcet sounds, when a violent rap at the door announced company. "Who can this be?" said Mrs. Connolly, rather discomposed; "I wish I had desired the servants to deny me." Just as she had finished speaking,

in came Mr. Wayley. He ran up to Mrs. Connolly, saying, " My dear Madam, I am going to Granby-row, my sister Fitzpatrick has a large party to-night, but I could not pass your door without inquiring for the amiable inmates of this house. It is true I heard something of you this morning; I called at Mrs. Barnard's five minutes after you had left her. She said the handsomest English woman she had ever seen was just gone; it was unnecessary then to tell me who had been there;" saying which, he looked full at Louisa, and seeing the harp, " Charming, irresistible!" he exclaimed, " will you not delight my ears with the sound of one of the sweetest instruments in the world? and with such a performer, how truly divine it must be: it would harmonize my ideas so much, that I should be thought one of the most charming at

my sister's party. I should make captive half the hearts there."

"I never understood," said Mr. Tarleton, drily, "that harmony, or softness, was a necessary preparative for a person going to attend a party of Lady Fitzpatrick's;—all there, I imagine, are in alt, and it strikes me you are in the right key." "I would not for the world," said Louisa, "be the means of unfitting you for the gay assemblage; for, as all my music is of a plaintive cast, it might have that effect!" So saying, she arose from her harp. "Cruel!" said Mr. Wayley; "I must punish you some other time for this unkindness;—but I had almost forgotten to tell you, Mrs. Connolly, that my friend Cust went this morning to the county of Wicklow, and that he desired me to say, on his return he should pay his respects to you;"—then, looking at his watch, and seeing it was near ten, declared he must

be off, as he had promised his sister to be with her early. So saying, he bowed most obsequiously to all, saying to Louisa, " Cruel fair one! I hope to be more fortunate when I call again. Adieu!" The party in Granby-row formed a striking contrast to the one he had left in Sackville-street;—for a moment it struck Mr. Wayley; but when mixing in the gay throng, as usual, all reflection was lost in the hilarity of the moment.

In the first drawing-room were cassino parties, all at deep play; in the back, reiterated bursts of merriment turned his footsteps that way, when he joined a party at blind-man's buff, mixed in the crowd, and soon found himself in the arms of a most lovely woman that was blinded. Without recollecting the rules of the play, he exclaimed, " Charming! delightful!" when the lady pronounced it to be Mr. Wayley she had caught. Shouts of laughter at his betraying him-

self followed; whilst the handkerchief was bound on his eyes by the fair hands that had at first taken possession of him. "I declare," said he, "I have been completely taken in;—but love, they tell us, is blind, and why should I object to so charming a bandage?" So saying, he turned round, and attempted to be as successful as the fair one he had just relieved. From blind-man's buff they amused themselves with other games, equally noisy and romping, till supper was announced; when Lady Fitzpatrick led the way to an elegant *petit souper*, where the most delicate viands of the season were spread on a large oval table. As sociability without form was to be the order of the night, every thing was done to add to the snugness of the appearance; the ladies actually went in short dresses for the convenience of romping; they styled themselves the romping and quizzing parties; the joke

and repartee went round the table, the keen wit of the Honourable Mrs. Stafford kept it in a roar of laughter and applause, whilst the beauty of her person attracted the eyes of every one. Her raillery was levelled at some of the first characters in Dublin; men who for her risked character, and sacrificed domestic comfort,—that pure source from whence flow some of our choicest enjoyments.—Let the sensualist say what he will, there, and there only, is true pleasure to be found. The flash of genius enlivened the whole table,—Mrs. Connor was not deficient, Lady Fitzpatrick bore her part; but vanity was the shrine at which she sacrificed, and the flame ever burned. Some of the first men of fashion in Dublin were of this party.

"Have any of you," said Lady Fitzpatrick, "seen the beautiful English girl that there was so much talking about at the last drawing-room?" Some had

seen her, others not; but all had heard of her, and all were loud in her praise; Mr. Wayley was most rapturous;—"Well, but Henry," said Lady Fitzpatrick, "tell me what she is like?"—"Like," replied Mr. Wayley, "how shall I describe her?—she has the face of an Hebe, and the figure of a Grace!" "*Bravissimo! Bravissimo!*" said all the *Bon-vivants* of the party; where is there a poet who could describe his mistress in more glowing colours?" "I should like to see your Hebe," said Lady Fitzpatrick; "I suppose she is a ruddy looking English girl, something in the milk-maid style! I am told she is quite new in the world, so that she will do to quiz, if not for any other purpose."—"Delightful!" said Lord Mountmorrice, and the whole party; "your Ladyship is right, she will do to quiz in the first public place we meet her,—'pon conscience it will be good fun."—Mr. Wayley

was silent; dissipated as he was, he saw in the mild manners of Louisa Courteney a superiority that could not be ridiculed; although he delighted in the society he was in, he felt an inward exultation at the idea of how little that person would feel who attempted a joke at the expense of an object so superior.

When these gay votaries of fashion had discussed this subject, they wanted something to amuse them,—glees and duets were resorted to for that purpose. "Oh! thou who wert born to please me," was sung in a very impressive style by the Honourable Mrs. Stafford and the Honourable Mr. Butler.—"In thee each joy possessing," more feelingly, by Lady Fitzpatrick and Lord Mountmorrice. Mr. Wayley joined in "Care, thou canker of all joys." Charades closed the amusements of the night.—All retired pleased, and, except Mr. Wayley, were highly gratified; he had been accustomed to

return from one of these gay meetings all delight; some new conquest had in general flattered his vanity; but that night he had not taken the trouble to obtain one, Louisa Courteney occupying all his thoughts; her pre-eminent charms, her radiant eyes, lived only in his imagination; every other beauty faded on his fancy; her's was pure, unadulterated nature, which finds its way even to the heart of the libertine: it had sunk deeply into that of Mr. Wayley. Had Louisa been portionless, not known, he might for a moment have admired her loveliness; but had he met her in a cottage, he would have left her "to blush unseen, and waste her sweetness on the desert air:" now he saw her the admired niece of Mrs. Connolly, the favourite of nature and fortune, and he thought only how he could attach such an object to himself. These thoughts sent him sleep-

less to his pillow, and he really fancied he was in love.

Miss Maude, agreeable to her appointment, was in Sackville-street to breakfast; the business she wished to arrange with them was, the going to the Rotunda ball on the following night; it was expected to be a most excellent one, all the world was to be there, and it would be a charming time for Louisa to see and be seen by every body; "therefore, my dear Mrs. Connolly, you must not refuse. My aunt would have great pleasure in chaperoning Miss Courteney, but she is confined with a bad cold, so that I must intrude myself on your party." Mrs. Connolly said, in that case she should have a double inducement for going; and readily came into the plan of her young friend. After this important point in the opinion of Miss Maude was settled, the young ladies adjourned to Louisa's library to have a

little music, Miss Maude being a very tolerable performer.

They were playing duets, when they heard a voice saying,—" If music be the food of love, play on, enchanting Syrens!" and in a moment Mr. Wayley was before them. Louisa blushed very deeply from the surprize at seeing him in a room which was particularly appropriated to her use; but he interpreted that blush to the pleasure she felt at his arrival, and, before she could speak, seized her hand, which she hastily withdrawing, and rising, said, " Mr. Wayley, I am surprized exceedingly by seeing you here; nor can I imagine how it has happened; who directed your footsteps?" " Those charming sounds," said he, " which I hope to hear again;" re-seating her at the piano. " Come, I will not be denied; consider how cruel you were last night, in refusing when I intreated you would play; indeed it was unkind;"

and then putting on a most supplicating, good-humoured look; "Come, Miss Maude, petition for me, you are not so hard-hearted." "Poor creature!" said Miss Maude, "he looks so deplorable! Come, Miss Courteney, make him happy; let us finish the piece we were playing when he came in." Mr. Wayley appeared all rapture,—Miss Maude could hardly preserve her gravity till the conclusion, when she burst out into a most immoderate fit of laughter; "I declare, Wayley, I should have supposed you had been dying for Miss Courteney for these last twelve months, at least, for I never saw a more doleful, lover-like countenance in my life; why, what have you done to him, my dear? Here have I been playing off all my artillery ever since I knew him, without effect, and all at once you have taken him captive." Mr. Wayley tried to look confused; Louisa really felt so, and again rose to

go, when Mrs. Connolly entered the room. Never was surprize pictured on a countenance more than on that of Mrs. Connolly's at seeing Mr. Wayley; indeed, she almost frowned when she returned his salutation. "My dear Madam," said he, advancing to her, "do not look so repulsive; behold me led to this spot by sounds that were irresistible." "No sounds," said Mrs. Connolly, "can pardon your obtruding yourself without invitation into a room appropriated to Miss Courteney." "Now," my dear Mrs. Connolly, "relax those features, which were never intended to look cross; it was Miss Courteney I wished to see, and here I came to enjoy that felicity, judging that the melody I heard could only be produced by her;" and then dropping on one knee, "forgive me, dear Madam, for once; forgive a penitent." "Well, I will, for this once, pardon your boldness, and perhaps my niece may

do the same." She bowed assent, and the whole party returned to the parlour. Mr. Wayley wished to know if they purposed honouring the Rotunda on the following evening, and, on finding it was their intention to be there, solicited the honour of Louisa's hand for the first two dances. Mrs. Connolly looked as if she wished this engagement had not been made, but it could not be avoided.

"Pray," said Miss Maude, "what kind of party had you last night?" "As usual," said Mr. Wayley, "only, I did not so much enjoy it as I used to do; my thoughts were not exactly in tone for it; in fact, (looking significantly at Louisa,) I felt my heart on the road to Granby Row." With a great deal of light complimentary chat, in which he was an adept, he contrived to pass an hour with them, and then reluctantly took his leave.

After he was gone, as Louisa wanted to purchase some music, Mrs. Connolly proposed, that the two young ladies should go out shopping in the carriage, and desired they would drive to Lady Doneraile, and request her to retain Miss Maude to spend the day with them. As they went along, "How much reason," said Miss Maude, "I have to be angry with you, Louisa; here have I been trying, all my life, to gain the attention of that provoking creature, Wayley; for his approbation gives a stamp of fashion to every female he honours with his notice!" "I am astonished that should be the case," said Louisa. "Why, my dear," she replied, "were you not so beautiful as you are, his admiration of you would make you the envy of women, and the constant theme of the men." Just as she finished, the carriage drew up to the door of the music-shop in Dame-street; a posse of fashionable young men were lounging

about there; the moment they saw it was Mrs. Connolly's carriage, all were anxiously looking in the expectation of the ladies getting out; but Louisa, on seeing so many in and about the door, objected to it, and ordered the servant to desire them to bring out what music she wanted. Miss Maude, not being of quite so retiring a nature, looked forward; she was immediately recognized by Lord Mountmorrice, who came up to the door of the carriage to speak to her, when, gazing intently on Louisa, and expressively at Miss Maude to introduce him, but Mrs. Connolly not being present, she did not like to take his hint. "How is Mrs. Connolly?" said his Lordship, still looking at Louisa, who continued chusing the music she meant to purchase, in doing which she took off her gloves to pay the man, and discovered to Lord Mountmorrice one of the most beautiful hands in nature, which he really thought

was not inferior to his charming Lady Fitzpatrick. He bowed and looked disappointed as the carriage drove from the door, and returned to the groupe, most of whom had been at Lady Fitzpatrick's the night before. All were anxious to hear what Lord Mountmorrice thought of the fair English girl.

"Well! Mountmorrice!" said the Hon. Mr. Butler, "what do you think of Wayley's divinity?" "I think," replied his Lordship, "she is very lovely; but she has a great deal of rusticity; it is not that she looks inelegant either! but she has all that blushing timidity that will (as Lady Fitzpatrick remarked) do very well to quiz." "Her voice," said Butler, "appeared charming; it was softness itself; I thought it the sweetest English accent I had ever heard." "And I," said Lord Mountmorrice, "was captivated by the sound, and only that, for I was not favoured with any particular address.

The provoking little devil, Maude, did not introduce me, though I gave her many hints to that effect; but here comes Wayley! Let us row him for not being in time to see his charmer." "Why, my good fellow," said Butler to him, "where have you been all this morning? Fate has been unpropitious to you; your English beauty, that paragon of perfection, has just left the door." "I should indeed," said Wayley, "have thought myself out of luck, had I not had the happiness of spending the early part of the morning with her; and I have secured her fair hand for the first two dances to-morrow night." "Egad!" said Butler, "you are a lucky fellow! I wish I had visited Mrs. Connolly before her niece came, it would be too glaring to do so now."—"Nor would you be admitted," said Wayley, "for Mrs. Connolly is very particular as to her male associates. He uttered this with such

an air of self-confidence as amused the whole party, as it was well known his connexions with her husband's family was the principal cause of his intimacy with Mrs. Connolly; but Wayley wished to impute it to his own superior qualifications.

The ladies called on Lady Doneraile, who readily consented to her niece's returning to Sackville-street. Mr. Spenser joined them in the evening for the purpose of escorting Miss Maude home. He proved an agreeable addition to the family party; there was an interesting seriousness in his manner, which formed a pleasant contrast to Miss Maude's vivacity. He had admired Louisa when he first saw her in the packet; the soft melancholy that shaded her lovely features at that time had deeply interested him, and they had not lost any of their power when he saw her beautiful face animated and dressed in smiles. He

liked Miss Maude, for it was impossible to live in the same house without doing so, the never-ceasing good-humour of her manner could not fail to please, but felt for her as a sister. He wanted that tender interest, that niceness of feeling about all which concerned her, to make it love! He could have heard with indifference of her dancing with any man in Dublin, although he would have had pleasure in dancing with her himself; but when he found Louisa was engaged for the first two dances to Mr. Wayley, he felt an unpleasant sensation he could not give a name to; but when conversing with her he forgot all in the pleasure of the moment.

Miss Maude, full of the happiness she was to enjoy the next night at the ball, was all animation. Mrs. Connolly surveyed with delight this happy groupe; she felt in contributing to the happiness of others she increased her own; and her

sweet placid countenance, beaming on them affection and kindness, gave a zest to the rational enjoyments of the evening.—They parted in high spirits with the prospect of meeting on the morrow. The evening wished for by many arrived, and Louisa, accompanied by Mrs. Connolly, entered the elegant ball-room of the Rotunda. Many eyes were directed to them as they approached. Louisa, plainly dressed in a gown of white satin, nicely fitted to her shape, with pearl ornaments, looked more captivating than usual; the agitation always attendant on appearing in public to those not hackneyed in the ways of the world, gave a beautiful tint to her cheeks, which made her look irresistibly charming. The room was very full when they entered, and a kind of lane was made for them to pass through.—Mr. Wayley, who had been anxiously looking out for them, quitted a large party he was with, and coming up

to Louisa, claimed the honour of her hand, immediately leading her to the top of the room. Mr. Spenser felt a little chagrined, and was folding his arms in a reverie, when Miss Maude declared she would not dance with him at all if he was so negligent. This roused him; he owned his error, and handed her up the room next her friend. As Mr. Wayley led Louisa to begin the dance, the party he had quitted were still assembled; it consisted of Lady Fitzpatrick, the Hon. Mrs. Stafford, Mrs. Connor, the Hon. Mr. Butler, Lord Mountmorrice, and many more young men not immediately in their train, but fluttering round. Louisa, not aware of the intention they had formed to quiz her, could not help thinking there was something very impertinent in their stare, but concluded it was a fashionable manner she was unacquainted with, which prevented her feeling so much

abashed as she otherwise would have done; yet she was a little intimidated, but her natural gracefulness prevented it from appearing, and the gay fashionable party did not see any thing in her that could lead to the amusement they had planned.

In putting up her gown for the dance, Louisa's fan fell from her hand; Lord Mountmorrice, before Mr. Wayley perceived it, picked it up, and presented it to her, which she gracefully thanked him for, and he, thinking this a favourable opportunity, whispered to Wayley to introduce him. Her manner, during the time all this was passing, was critically remarked by the quizzing group: "She blushes too much," said the Hon. Mrs. Stafford, "which I always think a proof of weakness."—"A weakness (replied a gentleman who stood by,) so very uncommon to meet with now, that we should admire it, if only for its novelty. Another

very great recommendation,—it proves to us, there is no art in the composition of her complexion; beautiful as it is, it is all her own, and nature has ten thousand charms which can never be successfully imitated by the finest cosmetic."

During the time he uttered this speech, his eyes were fixed on the Hon. Mrs. Stafford, where red and white, and blue veins were admirably imitated; had she blushed at this pointed sarcasm, it could not have been seen; but her day of blushing had long gone by; she darted an angry look at the speaker, who still continued the praises which the beautiful, interesting appearance of Louisa had given rise to. As she mixed in the dance all eyes were upon her, those who had stood up before she entered, could not imagine where she came from. The men thought she was a celestial being descended from the clouds, and the women

could not help owning to their partners that she was handsome.

When the two dances were over, Louisa went to her aunt; she was sitting with Mrs. Barnard, who was looking more lovely than the first time Louisa saw her. Mrs. Barnard addressed her with a most bewitching smile, and Louisa, for the time, forgot she was the person she had declared she could never think pretty. The lovely children were not now before her, and the charming contour of Mrs. Barnard's countenance obliterated all recollection of her indifference to them. The dance had exhilarated the spirits of Louisa. The appearance of the elegant rooms had delighted her, all appeared charming; and to Mrs. Connolly's question of, "How have you enjoyed yourself?" she, in a very animated manner, declared, she never thought she should have liked a public place so much. Mrs.

Stafford who was passing at the moment, turned round in perfect amazement to take another look at the extraordinary being who appeared to be the age of seventeen, and had never been in public before.

On seeing Mrs. Barnard of the party, she ran up, delighted; declared she had been very remiss in not having called on her lately; "but you know, my dear, my companion prefers the sameness of the Circular Road to variety, in his morning excursions. It is more to the taste of the English to plod on in one dull round; they are stupid in general." So saying, she fixed her eyes on Louisa, thinking this rude speech would cause one of those blushes she so much reprobated; but here she was disappointed; the enlargement of Louisa's mind prevented her taking this rudeness to herself: she was astonished, indeed, at hearing it from the lips of a woman generally

allowed to be elegant, and of fascinating manners; but instead of being confused, as was intended, she, in her turn, took a survey of the person in whom were combined so many contradictory propensities. When Louisa looked seriously, there was an appearance of dignity and sense, which awed even the well-known assurance of the honorable Mrs. Stafford, who, finding she could not quiz, in no very good temper bid Mrs. Barnard good bye, till they should meet again.

CHAP. VI.

Mr. Wayley silently enjoyed the scene. He had once been a favoured admirer of Mrs. Stafford's, but she had neglected him, to gain the attention of one she thought to make more by; she was extravagant, which made her necessitous. Married early into a family that was not particularly delicate of their fame, she got indifferent to every thing that did not contribute to vanity and interest. Her husband, who should have been the protector of her honour, was careless about it, and supinely winked at any thing that might tend to their mutual advantage, even though the character of his wife was the forfeiture. They had once been separated, but, from their slender finances, induced to live together again, his for-

tune not being sufficient to make her an allowance adequate to her extravagant ideas. Necessity, not affection, kept them under the same roof; for it was merely that, as they were never seen together. When Mrs. Stafford spoke of her companion in her morning airings, Louisa thought it was her husband she meant; and was astonished when her aunt told her he was an Irishman. Louisa was going to express her surprise at what had passed, but Mr. Spenser came to claim her for the next two dances. Mr. Wayley followed her up the room, and declared he could not dance any more until he had again the honour of her hand. The gentleman who had sounded Louisa's praise, when Lady Fitzpatrick's party were passing their critique on her, moved to that part of the room where Mrs. Connolly was sitting. On seeing her, he exclaimed, "Do I see Mrs. Connolly here? I am delighted. Pray, ex-

plain the cause of my having this pleasure!"—"And I," said Mrs. Connolly, "am equally surprised at meeting Mr. Morrice, who, I thought, was still in the county of Meath." He informed her, that his brother being much better, he had returned to Dublin in the morning, too late to call on any of his friends.—"And where have you kept yourself in the room," said Mrs. Connolly, "that I have not seen you before?" He replied, that he had been looking at the dancers, and had been fixed to the spot by the most lovely creature he ever saw.

Whilst they were speaking, Louisa, having finished the dance, came up to her aunt. Mr. Morrice, who had seated himself by Mrs. Connolly, rose, as she approached, and offered her his seat.—"Allow me," said Mrs. Connolly, "to introduce you to my niece." Mr. Morrice started: this lovely being, of whom he had been the champion, was, he found,

the niece of his friend Mrs. Connolly! He was surprised and delighted. He immediately entered into conversation with both ladies; they were interrupted by the dancers joining them. Mr. Morrice was apparently lost in admiration, whilst Mr. Wayley was doing all in his power to engage Louisa's attention;—he was very importunate that she should dance again, which she declined. "Cruel, inflexible fair one!" he exclaimed, "cannot I, in any way, avert this harsh decree? But here comes Mountmorrice; I will ask him to plead for me.——My Lord, you could never arrive more opportunely; here am I suffering from the effects of premeditated cruelty. Miss Courteney has determined on not dancing any more; do intercede for me." "I am only astonished," replied Lord Mountmorrice, "that a person of Miss Courteney's extreme elegance and fragile form,

should have fatigued herself so long with the athletic exercise of dancing. 'Pon honor, I think it an amusement only fit for a milk-maid or a ploughman."

"And yet," said Mr. Wayley, a little disconcerted, "there is not a dance in Dublin but you are at."

"True, my good Sir," replied his Lordship, "but I never dance; never but when I am persecuted by the females of my acquaintance, and then I merely walk through the figure with them."

This speech was uttered in a most conceited manner, and with an air of grimace that roused the risible faculties of Louisa, who could not refrain from laughing.—The figure before her was sufficient to create mirth; a cut velvet coat, made in the very height of the fashion, with a flesh-coloured satin waistcoat, small-clothes, and stockings; a quizzing-glass, dangling from a long string; hair highly dressed and powdered; formed the ridi-

culous costume of a person, tall and emaciated, who appeared more worn out by dissipation than age. She was contemplating this curious figure, when Miss Maude, all animation, joined them, and was astonished she should feel fatigued: in fact she was not so, but hoped, by leaving off dancing, she should avoid the tiresome assiduities of Mr. Wayley; but in this she was mistaken; for he was determined not to lose sight of her for the night.

Mrs. Connolly proposed their walking through the rooms; Louisa admired the magnificence of them. "They are, indeed," said Mrs. Connolly, "very superb; and the laudable plan * they are on, adds to their recommendation." She then explained to her, that they assisted in supporting a most useful and excellent charity. Mrs. Barnard spoke feelingly

* They support the Lying-in Charity in Dublin.

of fostering mothers, and infants in distress; yet her own sweet children were neglected. Louisa could not account for this contradiction in feeling.

Mr. Wayley asked Mrs. Barnard if she intended going to the masquerade, that was to be at the end of the next month? She said, most certainly; that she always attended them; and she hoped Miss Courteney would go:—"We must positively all meet." Mrs. Connolly said, it was a species of amusement she did not like, nor did she suppose Louisa would. Mr. Wayley tried to talk her out of her prejudices.

They were interrupted, by Miss Maude's running to them, saying she had a request to make, which she trusted Louisa would not refuse;—there was a party of her very particular friends who wished to dance a cotillion; and if she were sufficiently rested, hoped she would join them, as they could not make up the set without her and Mr.

Wayley, who had promised to make one. "Do not refuse, my dear Louisa." Mr. Wayley took her hand, which she had not resolution to withhold from him; he led her to the set which was forming; it consisted of Lady Fitzpatrick, Mrs. Connor, two Miss Butlers, Miss Maude, and herself. The gentlemen the most conspicuous were, Mr. Wayley and Mr. Spenser, who just walked over the figure.

Louisa acquitted herself with a correctness and elegance that delighted all who were looking on, and a large party were collected for that purpose. Had any thing been wanting to give her eclat, this exhibition would have done it: her lovely form was seen to more advantage than it could be in a country dance. The gentlemen could hardly refrain from exclamations of delight; Wayley was all rapture; to the whole room he appeared as the favoured admirer of Louisa, and it was a high gratification to his vanity.

After indulging Miss Maude with two dances more, and partaking of some refreshment, Mrs. Connolly proposed going home; Mr. Wayley saying he would do himself the honor of calling on them in the morning, was offering his hand, to conduct Louisa to the carriage, but Mr. Morrice, who had closely attended the party, had before offered his; and Louisa, flattered by his attention, and complimented by his manner, readily accepted it, to the great annoyance of Mr. Wayley, who, turning on his heel, had no alternative but to attend Mrs. Connolly, Miss Maude's last partner having the care of her. She saw Mr. Wayley's chagrin; and, as soon as they were seated, said, "Well, my dear Louisa, I congratulate you on the conquest you have made of the heart of Mr. Wayley, for never did I see a man so deeply smitten; his whole manner appears to be altered; he used to be full of gaiety, and general attention:

you cannot think how much it was talked of in the room to-night."—"Indeed," said Louisa, "I am very sorry it should have been so; I have had too short an acquaintance with Mr. Wayley to authorize any thing of the kind; and were my intimacy ever so long, he is not at all the sort of man I should feel a preference for." The carriage stopping at the door, Mr. Spenser regretted that they had so short a distance to go; he handed the ladies out. Miss Maude being to sleep in Sackville-street, Mrs. Connolly insisted on her carriage going on to Merrion-square.

Various were the feelings which agitated the minds of our party; Louisa's were of the most tranquil kind. Pleased with all she had seen, she thought not of any thing to disturb her slumbers, much less that her appearance would furnish all Dublin with conversation for the following day. Miss Maude, in high glee, thought, with delight, of the execution

she had done, and the pleasure she had enjoyed at this charming ball. The next morning, after breakfast, she left them, and Louisa proposed to her aunt that they should visit Mrs. Brownlow, to avoid seeing Mr. Wayley, who she expected would call; and she was really tired of having him so perpetually near her; they therefore set off very early for St. Stephen's Green. Mrs. Brownlow was truly delighted to see them: it being a clear, fine day, Mrs. Connolly proposed taking a drive to the Black Rock.

This charming spot, which, in summer, was truly beautiful, had still sufficient attractions left to delight. Louisa was charmed with its picturesque appearance. As they stopped to admire a prospect, a gentleman rode up to their carriage, and Mrs. Connolly was happy to recognize Mr. Cust. He told her he had only returned from the county of Wicklow the day before, or he should have

called on her. She introduced him to her niece; there was a something particularly insinuating in his manner; he was pleasing, but looked unhappy. Mrs. Connolly and Mrs. Brownlow felt interested about him. The latter had been well acquainted with his mother, who was Irish, but having married in England, she had not seen her for many years.

This young man had been educated at the college of Dublin, and was so extremely partial to Ireland, that he often visited it. "He is much," said Mrs. Brownlow, "in the county of Wicklow; and I am told he has a cottage there; but I know not of any one who has visited him. I at times am fearful he may have formed some improper connection; but then again, my knowledge of his principles leads me to discard this idea. I highly esteemed his mother, and, for her sake, should be sorry were he to act wrong; but am fearful he has already given them

some uneasiness, as an early attachment made him resolute in refusing to unite himself to a lady his father proposed."

"How few, very few," said Mrs. Connolly, "marry the object of their first choice!" A deep sigh accompanied this remark. "I never would marry," said Louisa, "unless I could do so. How preferable to endure all the disagreeables attendant on a single state, to the being condemned to live always with a person you cannot love!" "I admire your refinement of sentiment," said Mrs. Connolly, "and I hope you will ever be able to preserve it pure and unblemished as it is. Circumstances, however, often occur, to prevent our following the bias of our minds; you, my love, I trust, will never be so situated, but be enabled to indulge every reasonable wish of your heart."

This conversation opened the channel of reflection in the mind of Mrs. Brownlow. Her daughter had consulted affec-

tion only in her marriage, yet she might be unhappy! Perfections, admired at seventeen, may, when more advanced, lose half their attractions, unless there were some more valuable endowments of mind. She trembled for so early a connection. Communicating her thoughts to her companions, they endeavoured to dissipate her uneasiness, and to divert her attention. Louisa gave her a full account of the last night's ball; Mrs. Brownlow was much amused with her remarks, which were all nature; she had a vein of drollery, so tempered by good humour, that it was the playfulness of a child which hung on her lips; no satire ever diminished the pleasure her conversation afforded.

On their return home, they called on Mr. Tarleton, who they found just returned from the courts of law; his spirits were at the lowest ebb. A fleet had arrived from India; no letter, or accounts of

his son; and he feared he was dead. Mr. James Tarleton was trying to laugh his brother out of his fears respecting his safety, but Mrs. Connolly's manner was more effectual; it was soothing, and suited better the temper of his mind.

Notwithstanding the obsequious servility of Mr. James Tarleton's manner, he did not feel perfectly at ease after the ladies came in, and soon after took his leave.

Mrs. Connolly did not like this brother of Mr. Tarleton; she could not help thinking he had been, in a great measure, the means of unsettling George Tarleton, of whom he had ever been jealous. His own sons were all in the army or navy; and it was at his house George first took a dislike to the profession his father intended him for.

To divert the attention of her friend, Mrs. Connolly spoke to him of her own affairs, consulting him on business; and

said, she thought of going soon to her cottage, near the Dargle, as she wished to adjust every thing there. Mr. Tarleton strongly approved her doing so, and advised it as soon as possible, as the country was not yet divested of its beauties, and Miss Courteney would have a more favourable opinion of that spot than if she saw it later in the season. "Come," said he, "you must say you will go; take Mrs. Brownlow with you, and in such society you cannot have any thing to dread."

Mrs. Connolly, who had always been in the habit of following his advice, consented, and promised, if not prevented, she would set out in the ensuing week. Louisa wondered there should be any thing to dread in visiting so charming a place as she had been informed her aunt's cottage in the Dargle was; she felt impatient to visit it. When Mrs. Connolly and Louisa returned home, they found

cards from Mr. Wayley, Mr. Morrice, Mrs. Barnard, and one of the Hon. Mrs. Stafford's.

This lady had formerly visited Mrs. Connolly, but the levity of her manner and conduct had induced her to drop the acquaintance, and she wondered at the motive that induced her to renew it; but Mrs. Stafford had assurance for any thing; she thought the loveliness of Louisa would attract many to her parties, for she began to find that, notwithstanding her insinuating manner, and brilliant wit, many even of her male acquaintance declined her invitations. She aimed at notoriety, and never scrupled at the means of obtaining it, so that the end was answered. It was of consequence for her to preserve some degree of respectability, and when she could do so with pleasure to herself she did it most willingly, but never made any sacrifices

at the shrine of prudence.—Her card was left particularly for Miss Courteney.

Louisa was called off from the surprise this visit had occasioned, by her maid's bringing in a letter from her father; overjoyed she hastened to read it. He informed her that he was going to take under convoy the India fleet to a certain latitude, and trusted he might be in England by the spring. He begged she would not be distressed at his absence, for being under the protection of so good an aunt, she had nothing to apprehend. Her tears flowed as she perused some excellent advice he gave her—"preserve," he concluded, "my dear Louisa, the same purity of principle and innocence of mind which nature has so eminently endowed you with, and which it has been my constant care to strengthen. I hope, on my return, to find my beloved child as uncorrupted as I left her; the

gaieties by which you are surrounded will not, I trust, have too many charms for my Louisa. Pleasures of this kind are but transient, and seldom take deep root in a well-regulated mind; and such, I am proud to think, my child possesses." She was much affected at the praises bestowed on her by her father, and on lifting up her eyes, she was confused at seeing an elegant young man standing before her; at first she did not know him, but almost immediately discovered him to be the Mr. Cust they had met in the road to the Black Rock, and of whom her aunt and Mrs. Brownlow had spoken so highly.

He apologized for the interruption, and said, he had inquired for Mrs. Connolly, and the servant having shown him in, he expected to have seen her. Louisa smiling through her tears, begged him to be seated, and sweetly explained the cause of her apparent grief, that her

feelings had been overpowered on receiving a letter from her father, who was soon going a long voyage, and folding up the valued letter, entered into conversation till Mrs. Connolly came into the room.

Mr. Cust was well acquainted with the pleasant village in Somersetshire where Louisa resided, many of his relations living near it; delighted she retraced with him every spot where she had passed her days of childhood. Who that has ever left their native soil, but feels a thrilling delight when talking of the place that gave them birth! We never, until we leave it, know how highly we prize it; when absent, every fond idea of infantine enjoyment crowds upon our senses, and there was a pleasure in talking to her countryman, that revived all these ideas in the mind of Louisa. The meadows where she had rambled in early youth, the little garden she had culti-

vated, marked out by a parent's hand for her amusement, lived in her mind's eye; and when Mrs. Connolly joined them, she found they were conversing as old acquaintances. There was a congeniality of sentiment, which banished all restraint.—Mr. Cust spoke of George Tarleton with the affection of a brother, and of his unaccountable absence; he told Mrs. Connolly he thought his uncle Mr. James Tarleton, had been to blame, yet he could not excuse his estranging himself from so good a father. He was going to England shortly, and intended making every enquiry about him.

Mr. Morrice called whilst Mr. Cust was with them; he joined in the wish they felt in discovering and bringing back this excellent young man; indeed, Mr. Morrice had a relative interest, for Mr. Tarleton was nearly connected with his family.

Louisa, as she did not know him, could

not so fully enter into their feelings, but she pitied a parent bereft of the society of his child; the sensible and affectionate mode of her expressing herself, proved the superiority of her understanding, and the goodness of her heart; she, indeed, shone most in quiet domestic society: there, the mild cheerfulness of her manner cast a vivifying ray on all around her; her's were not the spirits to dash at a ball, or add gaiety to the midnight revel; but in more quiet scenes, she was all the heart could wish. The sweetness of her smile and manner, increased the admiration Mr. Morrice had felt on first seeing her, and she was much pleased with him, for he was extremely interesting; although he had passed the hey day of youth, his features retained a great degree of expression; fine, dark, penetrating eyes, manly complexion, a good figure, and an insinuating address, made Mr. Morrice at

forty, as interesting as most men at twenty. Many females had sighed for him, but sighed in vain, for he was not a marrying man.

His brother, the Earl of Rossmore, wished him to marry to keep up the honours of their house. Mr. Morrice was unfortunately one of those eccentric beings who imagine wedded love less pure from its fetters, and in the language of Eloisa would often exclaim :

" Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,
" Spreads its light wings, and in a moment flies."

Yet Mr. Morrice would have been hurt had he been called a libertine; his ideas he fancied arose from sentiment; but they were mistaken ones indeed! He had been a great deal abroad, and had unfortunately become too apt a scholar in the new school of modern philosophy, which has ruined so many! It had been his misfortune to have known many un-

happy marriages, even when love led the way to the altar, and he would often say, that the necessity of living together, was alone sufficient to weaken the tie! These sentiments were only sported to his very particular friends, for he was too much a man of the world to make them generally known. To all the polish and suavity of manner of the French court, so distinguished during the reign of Louis and Antoinette, was added the manly spirit of an Irishman.

Mr. Morrice and Mr. Cust were to meet them at dinner, but they paid so long a visit that the ladies found they had but a short time to dress in.

CHAP. VII.

When they entered the drawing-room at Lord Doneraile's, Miss Maude, running up to Louisa, said she was delighted she was arrived, for that she was tired of talking of her; "you being just now the fashion, my dear, makes you the constant theme; and it is much better to talk *to* you than *of* you." Louisa thought so too; and agreed with her friend in regretting she had come so late, as the eyes of all were directed towards her when she entered.

Dinner was immediately announced, and she was placed between Mr. Morrice and Mr. Barnard. Mr. Wayley, casting a jealous eye, sat down, in no very good humour, next Mrs. Barnard. After din-

ner, a great deal of general conversation took place; and the well-known convivial powers of the Irish prevented those dull pauses which too often in England cast a gloom over the party.

When the ladies went into the drawing-room, Louisa was particularly introduced to Lady Almeria Morrice. This lady was sister to Mr. Morrice, and two years older. She had been a beauty, but frequently forgot that revolving years add to her experience, but take from her charms. She boasted of many admirers in her youth, but a romantic turn of mind had always prevented her from settling; however, there were many amiable traits in her character; she was not deficient in sense, though she was eccentric; her heart was made of the best materials.—She had been a good daughter to a very cross father; and now that she was become her own mistress, by his death, was determined to enjoy all the pleasure

in her power: not a public place in Dublin but she frequented; at every rout she was as much expected as the lady of the house. There was a romance in her manner, which was a continual source of amusement to her acquaintances, who, though they laughed at her foibles, could not but respect the goodness of her heart. On her introduction to Louisa, she went up to her with all the eagerness of a girl of fifteen, about to form an intimacy with a female friend. These intimacies so suddenly made are generally injurious to the parties who contract them; they do not, of course, arise from judgment or discrimination, but are the impulses of youth, and the offspring of a glowing imagination: every secret is reposed without reserve; and should one of the parties not be equal in sentiment or principle to the other, a quarrel generally ensues; every thing is divulged, and an intimacy formed with so many hopes, is destroyed. There

are few females but have experienced the truth of this in all its force; not that Louisa was going to do so with Lady Almeria; but the energy of her manner gave rise to the idea in the mind of Mrs. Connolly.

Lady Almeria declared she had been anxious all day to have a particular introduction to the charming English woman.—" Why, my dear," she continued, " you have enlisted more knights under your banners, than was ever known in the days of chivalry! Nothing but a tournament can settle all disputes, and declare who is the happy man! I am sure my brother will enter himself on the list, for never have female charms so powerfully assailed him!"

Louisa blushed at this address; she had seen Mr. Morrice but twice, and treated it as a joke; though from the air of seriousness it was uttered in, she might have supposed the sister had been

commissioned to make the brother's sentiments known. Lady Almeria and Miss Maude engrossed the conversation till the gentlemen joined them, which was earlier than the generality of men were accustomed to do in Dublin; but they had most of them attractions more powerful to the mind than the bottle.

Lord Doneraile, although he had all the hospitality so peculiar to the Irish, yet did not like his bottle more than was necessary, and all agreed, that the society of the ladies would be preferable to sitting until they were intoxicated. Card parties being formed, Mr. Wayley voted it a bore that young people should be obliged to play; when Lady Doneraile declared her house was Liberty-hall. They took the hint, and the younger part of the company adjourned to the music-room.

How much did Mr. Morrice wish that he could have been included in the num-

ber, but it was in vain; his juvenile days were certainly passed, although his mind remained the same. His sister, Lady Almeria, with whom he played, had occasion, more than once, to remark what little attention he paid to the game; he trumped his partner's best cards with as much composure as if he had been strictly adhering to the rules of Hoyle, and it was evident he felt happy when he could cut out. He was intreated to join a cassino party, but declined.

Lady Almeria, who saw through the cause of her brother's absence and abstraction, good-humouredly gave Lady Doneraile a hint that he was passionately fond of music. She immediately ordered a servant to shew Mr. Morrice to the music-room. At another time Mr. Morrice would have hastened there himself with the same nonchalance that he would have entered a drawing-room, but he was so conscious of the motive which led

him, that, for the first time in his life, he felt a timidity always attendant on true passion.

When the servant threw open the door, and announced him, Mr. Wayley sprung from one knee, where he had fallen at the feet of Miss Courteney, as she was sweetly warbling the air of Coolum, which Mr. Cust had intreated her to play, and was accompanying her with much expression. Mr. Wayley's attention had so much grimace in it, that it always raised Louisa's risible faculties; the smile on her face Mr. Morrice construed into an approving one, and he almost wished he had not witnessed it; his chagrin, however, soon wore off, and he joined in some catches and glees until they were called to supper. Mr. Morrice, claiming his seat by Louisa, was all animation; Mrs. Barnard, looking particucularly lovely, was deeply engaged talking over her ill-luck that night at cards;

her husband, not appearing to belong to her, chatted with Mrs. Connolly, who he very much pleased by praising Louisa, and hoped they should often see her at Clontarf; such an associate, he said, would be a real acquisition to their domestic circle.

Mrs. Connolly promised that on her return from the County of Wicklow, where she purposed going the following week, her niece should visit them. She saw through Mr. Barnard's motives; he was aware of his wife's pliability of disposition, and knowing she admired Louisa, trusted her example might work some favourable change. Miss Maude was in her usual spirits; indeed, she felt truly happy, for Mr. Spenser had paid her more than usual attention; he saw Louisa was occupied, and it was his custom to attach himself to one female for the time being; but not even this attention could quiet her rattle and good-

humoured drollery,—attacking Lady Almeria, in whose eccentricities she delighted, she said, she wondered her very rational mind should prefer a town life to a country one, for that she should suppose the charming retirement of Castle Rossmore more congenial to her feelings! Lady Almeria replied, that her heart sighed for repose; but that imperious necessity had forced her to emerge into the gay world, for hearing the Lady Lieutenant was about to hold a drawing-room, she always made a point of being present, to fill the duties of her station.

This was said with as much importance as if she was going to hold a court herself, and she continued, "I cannot help rejoicing I did attend, having witnessed the introduction of the brightest star that has ever appeared there." Saying which, she fixed her eyes on Louisa, and as most of the com-

pany heard the last part of the speech, their attention was directed to her, who was just in the act of answering some well-turned compliments of Mr. Morrice's.

Louisa, observing the general attention towards her, blushed deeply, imagining Mr. Morrice's manner had made her an object of remark; and she faultered as she spoke; the blush, and the unfinished sentence, he construed into favourable omens, and therefore continued his attentions, which, though not unpleasing to her, were irksome, from the fear that it made her an object of general notice, and her timid mind shrunk from that. Mr. Wayley began talking of the masquerade, which was to take place the latter end of October; he said it was to be patronized by the Lord and Lady Lieutenant, and it was expected to be a very good one; almost

all the party declared their intention of being at it.

Mrs. Connolly was applied to, if she did not intend taking Miss Courteney; but she would not promise. Lady Doneraile thought she ought to take her to an assemblage of that sort, as it would give her a more perfect idea of the manners and minds of the Irish than any other public meeting; hoped Mrs. Connolly would relax a little. She said she would consider of it.

This was enough for Mr. Wayley and Miss Maude; the former it filled with hope that he should meet Louisa in a place where he might make love to her without restraint; and the latter determined to teaze Mrs. Connolly into compliance, as Lady Doneraile had said, unless a large party was made she should not go. It was late, or rather early in the morning, when the party broke up.

The next morning, Mrs. Connolly

chatting with Louisa, said she had remarked the attention Mr. Morrice had paid her, and wondered at it, he being considered as rather indifferent to women in general, and an enemy to matrimony. He had always appeared to admit females in society as mere necessary evils; but disclaimed them as the tender wife and endearing friend; "therefore," said Mrs. Connolly, "I was astonished to see him, at supper, take that sort of notice of you, which must be gratifying to a rational mind, for it was not the frivolous attention which is paid to every pretty face, but seemed to proceed from a conviction of the superiority of the object, and is more dangerous than that of Mr. Wayley's;—were there no disparity in your years I should not object to the connection."

Louisa allowed Mr. Morrice to be most captivating in his manner; "but be assured, my dear aunt," she said, "you

have nothing to apprehend on his account, my heart, at present, is quite free, nor has it the least inclination to love any other objects than those which now occupy it, my beloved father and yourself; and there is little probability of its being otherwise engaged." Mrs. Connelly smiled;—she knew human nature better, and only hoped that when otherwise occupied, it might be by a deserving object: "But as your heart is at present in a great measure my own," she said, "I may venture to tell you I purpose going into the country next week, and must take you from this scene of gaiety for a short time; Mrs. Brownlow will accompany us, and you will, I hope, be able to endure the complaints of two old women."

Louisa assured her, it would be most pleasant to accompany them; she thought neither Mrs. Brownlow nor herself deserved the appellation she had given them;

indeed Mrs. Connolly had not the least appearance of age, but might be taken for Louisa's elder sister.

Every thing was accordingly arranged for going into the country,—numerous calls filled up their time whilst they remained; but all invitations were declined until their return. Their chief visitors were Miss Maude, Mr. Morrice, and Mr. Wayley; so much had the mild and native graces of Louisa charmed Mr. Morrice's senses, that he determined when she went into the country, to pay a visit to his friend, Lord Powerscourt.

Wayley was filled with envy at hearing this, and gave many hints for Mrs. Connolly to invite him; he spoke in raptures of the sweet cottage he had seen when a boy; but it would not do; Mrs. Connolly was going for retirement, and to settle some business;—Wayley was the last man she wished to intrude.

The day they set off was a very fine

one; they left Sackville-street in Mrs. Connolly's post-coach, calling in Stephen's-green to take up Mrs. Brownlow. The tints of autumn were shewn to great advantage by a brighter sun than generally appears in October; the road they travelled was picturesque and beautiful; as they approached the cottage, every thing appeared enchanting, and Louisa was surprized, that whilst praising it to her aunt, she perceived in her an air of melancholy and sad abstraction, which she saw was not unnoticed by Mrs. Brownlow, who apparently forced her own spirits to raise those of her friend.

Stopping at the door of the cottage roused Mrs. Connolly from the reverie into which she had fallen, and on lifting up her eyes to speak to the faithful domestics who came out to receive them, Louisa perceived they were full of tears.

"Ah! Patrick," said Mrs. Connolly,

" how are you? I am happy to see you and Norah well."

" Faith, and on my honour," said Patrick, " it does my little bit of a heart good to see your dear swate face once more at your own nate little cottage of Dargle, which I hope your Ladyship's honour will find as you left it; bating that it is a good deal out of repair, and wants painting, d'ye see, and the paper is tumbling down in most of the rooms."

Whilst Patrick was giving this characteristic account of the premises, Norah led the way to a neat breakfast parlour, where there was a good fire, and she had arranged every thing in a comfortable manner; a great degree of gloom spread itself over the countenance of Mrs. Connolly on entering; but Louisa was so much delighted with every thing she saw, that it soon dissipated the melancholy of her aunt, whose attention was diverted by showing her the

house, which certainly could not have been called a cottage, but from the style in which it was built; it was very spacious, stood on a great deal of ground, and had but one story, most of the rooms running behind; the front was covered with jessamine and eglantine, and although they were stripped of their foliage, Louisa could readily imagine how charming they must appear in summer.

Crossing the court Louisa saw a long passage, which she was going up, but Mrs. Connolly told her, there were only two rooms not now inhabited. She thought her aunt appeared much confused when she said this; she, therefore, did not ask any questions, fearing to distress her; but felt more than ever convinced some mystery clouded her happiness. Mrs. Connolly observed an absence in the manner of Louisa during dinner, and in some degree guessed the cause; she, therefore, determined on mak-

ing her acquainted with her history from the first of her marriage, as she had no doubt but the rooms that were shut up had created some surprise and anxiety in her mind.

As they went to bed, she gave her a small packet, which she told her to peruse as soon as she could. Norah attended to show her the way to her room, and in passing the long passage she had remarked in the morning, she said, "That leads to some rooms." "Yes, Madam; but they are locked up, and never to be opened whilst my lady is here." "Are they very good rooms?" asked Louisa. "The best in the house;" answered Norah; "they were built when——" here she stopped, and seemed sorry she had said so much. Louisa did not think it right to ask any more questions; indeed, had she done so, she would not have got any information from Norah, she being, in every sense of the word, a confidential

servant; she lived with Mrs. Connolly on her marriage, and having herself married the butler afterwards, they had become completely a part of the family.

Louisa would have read the manuscript that night, but felt too much fatigued; she therefore suspended her curiosity till the next day. In the morning she was surprised when her maid told her it was past eight o'clock, and that Mrs. Connolly was already in the breakfast parlour. She accused herself of insensibility in having slept so much longer than she usually did: her aunt she found had been up some time, and that she had a bad head-ache. "Ah!" she thought, "Why! did I not rise early to read the manuscript in my possession? I should then have known the sorrows of this beloved relation, and might have afforded some balm to her wounds." The humid drops, caused by these ideas, still trembled in her eyes when she entered the

breakfast parlour, and her aunt, scarcely less agitated than herself, answered her inquiries with a degree of sadness that afflicted her. Both distressed by their own sensibility, the one wishing she knew what had made her aunt so unhappy, and the other trembling lest the contents of the manuscript had been perused, and had lessened her in her niece's opinion; for well she knew the impetuosity of youth, and thought, that though it was a late hour when she retired to rest, she might have been induced to read it.

But such was not the disposition of Louisa; gentle and confiding, no idle curiosity dwelt in her bosom. That her aunt wished her to read an account of her past life, was enough for her to do so; the circumstance of the rooms being shut up, had surprised her, and certainly led her to think there was more in the history of her aunt than she had on first

knowing her apprehended. Their mutual embarrassment, when joined by Mrs. Brownlow, wore off. Mrs. Connolly said, as the day was fine, they would take a drive to show Louisa the country. Never had she been more delighted, the picturesque and romantic appearance of the surrounding scenery was something new, and she wondered how her aunt could ever leave this charming spot.

"You would not wonder," said Mrs. Connolly, if you had read my history; and for some time she was absorbed in her own reflections." But seeing Louisa affected by her seriousness of manner, she regained all that composure, which seemed to be the real bent of her disposition, but which, at times, had been interrupted by unfortunate circumstances.

On their reaching the Dargle, Louisa was perfectly delighted; the most charming landscape in nature broke on their view: majestic rocks hanging over each

other; full-grown oaks, ash, and elm, beautifully interspersed with laurustina, myrtle, and arbutus, holly, ivy, and other evergreens, their red berries quickening the beauty of the trees; small shrubs growing out of the sides of the rocks horizontally; others perpendicular, striking the beholder with admiration, to the mind of Louisa opened a new scene of delight. Walks meandering through shady groves of ascent and descent, with delightful streams, clearly ripling over rough and craggy stones, tended to give this charming spot the appearance of fairy ground. That they might more perfectly enjoy the beauties of this paradise, Mrs. Connolly frequently stopped the carriage, and Louisa explored on foot the beautiful walks with which this place abounded. They returned by Lord Powerscourt's, and were much struck by the grandeur and beauty of the cascade, which, dashing impe-

tuously down the rock, deposited its foaming wave on the craggy surface below. Louisa was pleased to hear from her aunt that this charming spot was within a walk of their residence, and that she might go by a nearer way to it, as they had taken a circuitous round by the Dargle. They all returned with spirits much revived from their morning's excursion to a late dinner, and by the time they had finished, the evening was fast closing.

Louisa left the two ladies at Piquet, and went to a small library that was a kind of passage-room to those that were shut up; a folding door separated it from them, over which hung a large picture, the most conspicuous figures of which were two men fighting: she had not noticed it before, but on going into the apartment, the last ray of light had just fallen on it, and she was particularly struck by the fine athletic form, and

manly figure of one of the men; that of a female, rushing between them apparently to end the quarrel, gave an uncommon interest to the piece, and she stood contemplating it, till she found herself shrowded in darkness. She thought she heard a gentle stir in the adjoining room; and although she had no superstitious fears about her, yet she instinctively shuddered; her courage forsook her, and she rung the bell, when the maid coming to her with a light, she joined the ladies in the parlour wishout mentioning her fears, but determined on returning to that room to read her aunt's manuscript, which she eagerly began.

CHAP. VIII.

The History of Mrs. Connolly.

THIS history, my dear Louisa, was written for your father. As he must be ignorant of many circumstances which occurred after my marriage, I wished to put him into possession of them, but have adapted it now more particularly for your perusal.

About the time of your father's marriage, we were visited by Mr. Tarleton and his wife. Mr. Tarleton had been at Oxford with your grandfather, and an intimacy was formed which subsisted without interruption during their lives. Mr. Tarleton married a very amiable woman, and wishing to introduce her to his friend, brought her to Cliffdale. I

was then quite a child, but recollect being much noticed by Mrs. Tarleton, and my father gave her a promise that I should, when old enough, visit them in Ireland.

From having early lost my mother, my father was more indulgent to me than to the other branches of his family; indeed, I had too much my own way. I constantly teazed him to let me pay this promised visit, but he said, he could not part with me till the following spring, when I should visit Mrs. Tarleton, with whom I kept up a correspondence. But I soon lost all wish of going from home!

An officer, a Scotchman, of good family, came with a recruiting party into our neighbourhood; he brought with him letters of strong recommendation to my father, who gave him a general invitation to his house, and there was scarcely a day but he passed with us at Cliffdale. Every one liked him, and,

unfortunately, my heart became a victim to his many perfections. His person was formed with the nicest symmetry, his manners, manly and captivating, his education, as is the case with the Scotch in general, had been most excellent. My father, I knew, admired him as a companion, and my foolish heart fancied he must love him as a son. Certain of success, he made proposals; and, when being asked what were his prospects in life, he frankly owned that on interest alone he built his advancement, my father contemptuously told him, that he had other views for his daughter than to suffer her to marry a poor Scotchman, who depended only on his friends; and forbade him his house for ever.

The spirit of Balfour was roused by treatment he thought he so little merited, and he was near leaving the neighbourhood without seeing me, as he had, by this time, procured the number of re-

cruits required, and might join his regiment when he pleased. But love, which conquers every thing, got the better of his pride, and he determined on seeing me before he went to bid an eternal adieu. We met at the house of a friend with whom I was very intimate; this interview was most trying to the feelings of us both; he swore to me everlasting fidelity, and I most solemnly the same. He would not, he said, urge my eloping with him, he had too much pride and regard for me to do that, for if we married without my father's consent, I should of course forfeit all claims to his future notice, and that, as his fortune was not sufficient to support me in the comfort I had a right to expect, he would not involve me in misery.

Shall I confess to you, my dear Louisa, that I almost thought Balfour too reasonable, nay, for the moment it struck me he did not love as I merited. But I

was only seventeen, he twenty-four; he thought with the reason of a man, I loved with the romance of a girl. Great were his struggles when he was about to leave me; all his resolution vanished; he found he could not tear himself away, and determined on staying a week longer. We continued to meet in that time at the house of our mutual friend; every fresh interview served to convince me more of his attachment, and that it was fixed on a basis not to be shaken; he gave me a solemn contract, wherein he promised not to marry any other woman; I gave him a similar one; mine could not be binding; but with what delight did I sign the paper that declared I would be his, and that no threat should ever induce me to become another's, whilst he was in existence! I felt more composed after I had done this, as it seemed then as if I were indeed his wife! The day after he bid me farewel; sad was the parting!

My father, who observed from time to time my altered looks, never failed to throw out some ill-natured aspersions on him who had caused my uneasiness; he accused him of dishonour in having engaged my affections, but he should have reflected that he alone had been to blame. The parent who admits a young man into the bosom of his family runs all risks; my affections were disengaged, and it might have been supposed what would follow.

My father was not deficient in the knowledge of the world; but not being alive to those tender sensibilities which create affection, he did not foresee the evil he now lamented. His constant expostulations, wishing me to forget Balfour, rendered home unpleasant to me, and I petitioned him to make my long-intended visit to the Tarletons, which he readily complied with, hoping change of scene,

and new objects, might cure me of my passion.

My motive for going was of a very different nature; it was to fly from my father's reproaches. Before I quitted England I received letters from Balfour, informing me his regiment was going to the West Indies, and that the hope of my constancy supported his spirits, trusting, that in a few years he should be able to claim me as his own. Every fresh assurance was given on my part, a correspondence was settled through the medium of our friend, and the papers shortly after informed me of the sailing of the transports. There being no chance then of hearing from him for some time, I fixed on my departure for Dublin, and Mr. Tarleton very kindly came for me. My principal regret in leaving England arose at quitting your amiable mother, who derived her greatest

consolation from my society, and as I had encouraged her match with my brother, I did every thing to soften the rigour of my father's conduct.

In the house of Mr. Tarleton I enjoyed a temporary calm which my bosom had for some time been a stranger to; my natural vivacity returned, and looking forward with hope to the time when I should get a letter from Balfour, I enjoyed myself more than I had thought it possible. My temper, naturally sanguine, led me to hope for the best; this disposition, though it gives cheerfulness for the moment, subjects the possessor to cruel disappointments. I partook, with all the animation peculiar to youth, in the amusements of Dublin.

Mr. Tarleton's house was the resort of all men of talents and fashion in the Metropolis; his profession and abilities drew the former, and the latter were attracted by the pleasant society ever to

be found there. It was at this period I first saw Mr. Connolly; Mr. Tarleton was his guardian; his father had been dead about a year, and had left him an immense property: Mr. Connolly, being an only child, had been much indulged, and Mr. Tarleton was trying to correct some of his bad propensities, which the foolish fondness of his father had given rise to; his manners were not unpleasing, he had always been in high life, his fortune being a passport to all those scenes where fashion reigns triumphant, and he had not resolution to withstand the allurements of dissipation, but became a complete victim to its too fascinating powers. He possessed so much dissimulation that Mr. Tarleton did not know half of his excesses or degeneracy.

From the first time of his seeing me, his attentions were pointed, and even more so than I was aware of myself; something like love took possession of

his bosom, and for a time, he gave up his other pursuits to devote himself to me. Mr. Tarleton encouraged the attachment, and used often to say that if I would marry Connolly, it would be the saving him from destruction. But, admitting my affections had not been engaged, I did not feel inclined to try my powers of reformation, never coinciding in that opinion, that a reformed rake makes the best husband: the woman must be confident indeed of herself who thinks she can recal to the paths of virtue the man who has forsaken them; vice is too alluring to be given up, and a heart, so devoted, spurns the feminine efforts that would save it.

The conversation of Mr. Connolly was entertaining, and beguiled many of my hours; but the "sunshine of hope" soon disappeared. Packet after packet arrived and no letter from Balfour. The assiduous attentions, then, of Mr. Connolly

became irksome: with an impatience that was natural to me at that time, I treated him with disdain. Mr. Tarleton was vexed, and solicited for his ward, but to no purpose. I felt wretched, and imparted all my feelings to Mrs. Tarleton, for I could no longer confide them to my own bosom. She tried to assuage them, and endeavoured to persuade me to think no more of Balfour, as she was convinced my father would never consent to my marrying him. The more they spoke of Connolly the more I disliked him, and felt vexed that I had ever been civil to him; I wrote again to my friend, who was to forward my letters, who assured me none had come; still I could not feel satisfied, and was anxious to return home as soon as the weather was settled.

Mr. Tarleton took me back to my father; the scenes where I had first seen Balfour renewed my sorrows, and I found little consolation but in talking of

him to my friend, at whose house we had met. Calling on her one morning, I thought she looked unusually serious, and dreaded asking her the cause, when, speaking of my not having heard from Balfour, she said, perhaps sickness might be the cause of his silence, as the climate was so unfavourable to Europeans; this had never occurred to me, and I shuddered at the bare idea that he might be lost to me for ever; conviction flashed on my senses, and I read in the saddened countenance of Mrs. Fielding the confirmation of my fears. I intreated her to tell me the worst, as I saw by her manner I had nothing to hope! She then told me, she had just received a letter from a brother officer of Balfour's, informing her that shortly after their landing he died of the fever of the country, and that some letters of her's having reached them expressing anxiety at not hearing from him, he thought it right to

give the necessary information. The violence of my emotions quite overpowered me on hearing this melancholy account, and I fell lifeless on the floor.

It was a week before I was able to be moved home; my father, during my illness, was all tenderness, and his apparent kindness won on my heart, and roused me from the state of despondency I had fallen into. Little did I imagine that this kindness was assumed to answer his own purpose—I was much consoled by his softened manner, and doubly regretted the loss of Balfour, as I fondly imagined, had he been living, my father might have been brought to consent to our union. Unpracticed in the school of dissimulation myself, I never suspected it in others; my peace of mind, in some measure returned, aided by my father's kindness. A promised visit from Mrs. Tarleton, in the autumn, kept up my spirits; and my father allowing me fre-

quently to be with your angel mother, soothed me; he would not see her himself, but did not deny me; this was a fresh indulgence, and for which I was most grateful.

Autumn arrived, and brought with it my beloved Mrs. Tarleton, and her respected husband; but with them a considerable alloy to my happiness, in the presence of Mr. Connolly. I found afterwards that soon after he saw me, he had written to my father, and obtained his consent, which accounted for his persevering, and persecuting me so, notwithstanding my contemptuous treatment of him. I accused Mrs. Tarleton of unkindness in bringing him, but she declared, it had been settled between my father and himself, and that Mr. Tarleton could not refuse his accompanying them. I avoided his attentions as much as possible, and, notwithstanding he assumed the most insinuating address, I

could hardly bear his society, and frequently treated him with contempt. All this he bore with the utmost patience, and, encouraged by my father, seemed not to care whilst he was suffered to remain in the house, which he did the whole time the Tarletons continued, and embittered the pleasure I should otherwise have taken in their company.

When they had left us about a month, my father called me into his study, and told me I must prepare to marry Mr. Connolly in April, when he was coming to claim my hand; I answered, in a very determined manner, that his coming would be useless, as I never would marry any man; that all my affections were buried in the grave with Balfour. He sneeringly told me that was a pity, for had he lived, my affections must have been buried in my own bosom, for that Balfour had a wife! To convince me, he took a letter from his pocket, from

that wife; he likewise shewed me one from an officer, informing him that Balfour had married, just before he quitted Scotland, a most amiable woman, who was now left in distressed circumstances, and that they purposed raising a subscription for her in the regiment; the poor creature, he said, is inconsolable for the loss of a husband she tenderly loved. This was almost too much for my senses; I examined the letter and found it was no counterfeit; it had the foreign mark, and its whole appearance convinced me it was but too true. My pride and principles took the alarm, and I was determined to banish from my mind, a man who had acted so base a part. I left my father's presence in a state of misery, for I felt myself completely humbled, and my feelings were not to be described. I hastened to your mother, whose gentle tenderness consoled

me, and into her sympathizing bosom I poured all my woes!

My father, on my return, was all goodness—he knew the key to my feelings, and that by kindness he could mould me as he pleased. On discovering Balfour's baseness, my mind, which then hastily decided on any thing, determined me to shun every idea of him, and I inwardly resolved on marrying Mr. Connolly, to prove to the world that I had discarded all thoughts of a man who had acted so villainously: still villainy and Balfour seemed at variance, and my lips could not pronounce what my heart felt. Those who have ever truly loved can say how impossible it is to hate; we may wish to do so, but some lurking tenderness forbids the harsh mandate, and we love, when reason should conquer the passion! Where is there a heart but will subscribe to these truths? Should there

be such a one, I would disown it as my associate, for apathy must be its ruling principle; for, if dead to the calls of love, it must also be insensible to those of friendship.

I now determined on convincing my father I possessed self-command, and as I had given him considerable uneasiness, wished to make every reparation in my power. On his again renewing the suit of Connolly, I told him, I would comply with his wishes. Delighted with my compliance, he hastened his return, but this was unnecessary; my mind, once made up, was determined. My principles were shocked, and my pride so deeply wounded, that I felt anxious to prove to my friends not one particle of affection lingered in my bosom for an object so unworthy. I therefore did not oppose my father's desire of sending for Mr. Connolly; I had never loved any one but Balfour,

and it was indifferent to me who I married. Mr. Connolly's fortune and person had advantages, and his close connection with the Tarletons was a stronger recommendation than any other. He obeyed my father's summons, and, in a week after, he came to Cliffdale—we were married, and immediately set off for Dublin.

I found the house in Sackville-street prepared for me; it was fitted up in the first style of elegance, and I appeared to the world to enjoy every blessing a fine fortune could bestow; but there wanted one, and that a principal requisite to my happiness; this was a congenial mind. Mr. Connolly, naturally a libertine, soon returned to all his gay pursuits, and I had not been united to him more than two months before I discovered I must not expect to find a companion in my husband. The little winning attentions which had at first led

me to notice him wore off, and in their place I found moroseness and malice; he had a great deal of personal vanity, and my first rejection had so much mortified him, he had persevered afterwards, fully determined to torment the object who could not love him: being well aware of the motive which induced me to accept him, he was determined to punish me, and I found, when too late, he had married from pique more than love: his vanity was flattered by my personal appearance, and I had every advantage his fortune could bestow to contribute to it; my carriage was the most elegant in Dublin; my house fitted up in the first style of magnificence, my jewels and dress the same. But still an aching heart was hid under all, and I sighed for that peace which was now lost to me for ever. In early life my temper had more of impatience in it than at present, and I frequently

upbraided my husband with his treatment of me; when he would retort, that had Balfour lived I never would have married him; and that he thought his treatment was just what I deserved;—at times a gleam of good humour would appear as before marriage, but the slightest event would extinguish it, and I found it was in vain to expostulate.

CHAP. IX.

At the close of the summer, Mr. Connolly proposed visiting his favourite cottage in the county of Wicklow. I eagerly grasped at any change, thinking it might make some alteration in his temper;—he said he should remain some time for the benefit of shooting, when it commenced. I was enraptured at the first sight of this charming spot, and hoped in its retirement and romantic beauties to regain my peace of mind; but here I was mistaken; the same harshness of temper pursued Mr. Connolly.—I seldom saw him after breakfast till he came home to a late dinner, when, inebriety and ill-temper closed the amusements of the day, and left me the hapless victim of his folly and unkindness. I

had endured this wretched life about six months, when one morning the letters were brought in as usual, I happened to look over some that were given to Mr. Connolly, and thought I saw one addressed to myself in my maiden name. I immediately demanded the letter, which he had by this time opened, and starting up to take it from him, I saw the name of Balfour! That well-known name bewildered my senses, for though every idea had been discouraged respecting him, yet his image lived in my mind, and the least thing recalled his remembrance. A passion that has been deeply rooted is soon revived, and then it glows with redoubled ardour; so it was in my case, the name of Balfour in mystery awoke every fond idea, and on entreating again to see the letter, and being refused, I was no longer mistress of myself; but perceiving a pistol that was loaded over the chimney of the library,

I pointed it at the breast of Connolly, and declared his life should be the forfeiture of his refusal. Dismayed and panic-struck by the wildness of my manner, he put the letter into my hand, and quitting the room, said he would leave me until I had recovered my senses, or lost them for ever. The latter part of the speech was nearly fulfilled, for on reading the letter, I found it came from Balfour himself, upbraiding me for my neglect of him; but yet not accusing me of inconstancy, still hoping some unlucky circumstance had prevented my letters reaching him; but now, he said, he should claim me of my father, as he had come into an ample fortune by the death of an elder brother.

I could scarcely finish this letter, which was filled with affection, and apparently honest expressions of regard; all appeared a mystery; but as soon as I could collect my scattered senses, it struck

me, that some great deception had been used, and that I had become its victim. Balfour was at Portsmouth when he wrote, and only waited my answer to throw himself at my feet. The letter had been sent to my friend, who forwarded it, unthinkingly, to me. The varying passions of my mind were almost too much for my frame.

As soon as I had in some degree recovered my composure, I answered his letter, and told him every circumstance that had occurred, and finally, as I had given my hand to another, I must never see him more!

All my morning was occupied in writing this letter, and the dinner hour arrived; but not Mr. Connolly. Three days elapsed in this way; on the fourth, he made his appearance; I spoke to him on his entrance, when he hoped my cogitations had been pleasant, and that the letter from the darling of my heart had

amused me. I did not think it worth while to answer his insults; and our time was passed in solemn gloom; his days spent with his Bacchanalian friends, and mine, drowned in tears.

Nearly three weeks had elapsed since the receipt of the letter that had so much agitated me, when, sitting one evening in the library, the servant said a person below wished to see me on business; thinking it was some of the tenants I was in the habit of seeing, I desired the servant to shew him up stairs. A tall person entered; the candles were not yet brought in, and I could only see by the faint gleam of the fire, that it was the majestic figure of a man apparently trembling, and bending as he approached. Shutting the door, he attempted to take my hand; screaming with terror, and almost fainting from apprehension, I would have rung the bell.—

"Stop, Madam! nor banish from your presence a man whom your conduct has made miserable!—Hear my justification, and then I demand your's! For are you not my affianced wife?"—At this I started; the manner and voice convinced me it was Balfour who spoke; I pointed to a chair, and, tottering with weakness, seated myself in mine, from which I had risen at his first entrance. He proceeded to tell me, that I had been grossly imposed on; that in the regiment with him there was another of the same name, who had died in the West Indies; and that he had discovered that the widow of this officer, in distressed circumstances, had been induced by a handsome present from my father to write the sort of letter she did, to deceive me; that he had repeatedly written, and was in despair at not hearing from me; that he had never heard of my marriage until my own letter informed him of it; and,

despair lending wings, he had hastened to me, hoping from my own lips to have a still further explanation, as he could not be satisfied without clearing up his conduct, and convincing me, by the most positive assertions, he was not the villain he had been represented.

My tears flowed copiously whilst he vehemently exclaimed against the authors of the deceptions practised against us to ruin our peace. At length I convinced him of the necessity there was for his leaving the house, as my husband might return, and his being met there would add to the unhappiness I had already endured. "Farewell! then," he exclaimed, "first, best object of my affections, farewell!" And fervently shaking my hand, the big tears rolled down his manly cheeks;—I sobbed with agony, when the door hastily opened, and Mr. Connolly, furious from liquor and jealousy, flew into the room.

" Villain !" he exclaimed, " your life must be the forfeit of this base intrusion!" Then giving him a pistol, he took another himself;—I rushed in between them; which Balfour seeing, threw his pistol from him. I fell lifeless on the floor, notwithstanding which, Connolly unfeelingly fired, and unfortunately took too good an aim,—Balfour was wounded. I remained, as my maid afterwards told me, in a state of insensibility.

Mr. Connolly immediately left the house to secure his own safety, thinking Balfour was mortally wounded. As he passed through Dublin, he informed Mr. Tarleton of the event, who directly hastened to me. Balfour was removed to an inn at Bray, and Mr. Tarleton took me back with him to Dublin. The affair was much less spoken of than we imagined it would be; it was said, that Mr. Connolly, when in liquor, had quarrelled

with an officer, who he had dangerously wounded, and that in consequence he was gone abroad until the officer's fate was known.

At this period an account came to Mr. Tarleton of my father's death; he broke the intelligence to me as gently as possible; but still this event was peculiarly distressing to my feelings. My father had been informed of the melancholy transactions that had occurred, and the remorse he felt certainly hastened his end; the knowledge of this prevented my feeling any displeasure against a parent who had been the cause of all my unhappiness, and I fervently wished he had lived to receive my perfect forgiveness.

The distress of my mind caused a premature labour, and I brought into the world a daughter.——Louisa started at this, never having heard that her aunt had a child, and pausing, her eyes invo-

luntarily fell on the picture that had before attracted her attention; she thought she saw it gently move—the next moment the door it concealed opened, and the figure of a female with a child in her arms appeared in the opening.—Louisa screamed, and the figure hastily withdrew;—she had scarcely power to ring the bell, ere the maid appeared to inform her supper waited, and closing the narrative, much agitated, she joined the ladies.

Her aunt perceived that she was a good deal ruffled, and, on the servant's quitting the room, Louisa told her the cause. Mrs. Connolly, all astonishment, said it must have been the effects of imagination, for that the rooms had been shut up for some time, and that no one ever went into them but Norah to keep them aired. Ringing the bell, she desired Norah might come to her, when she asked her if any one ever occupied

the rooms that were shut up? On her answering in the negative—Mrs. Connolly desired Patrick and herself might go and see if any one was in them. Norah looked confused, but immediately obeyed the commands of her mistress.

On returning with Patrick, she assured them no one was there. Mrs. Connolly used every means in her power to compose Louisa, saying the figure she fancied she had seen, must have been caused by the agitation of her spirits from reading; Louisa felt herself almost convinced, for not believing in supernatural appearance, and reasoning with herself, she thought it must have been a chimera of her own imagination. Her mind recovered its composure, and she soon retired to her room, wishing to finish the history of her aunt, which had so much interested her; when it continued as follows:

After the birth of my child, new feel-

ings, new ideas, broke on my mind, for who that has ever heard the first plaintive cry of their infant, but feels a new world opening on their senses; this is the sweet band that unites still closer that of wedlock. At that awful but delightful moment all trouble was forgotten—my whole nature seemed changed; resentments were softened into forgiveness; and I prayed for Balfour's recovery as the means of restoring Mr. Connolly to his family; I anxiously wished for the moment when he might behold his child! I wrote to him in the most affectionate manner, told him how much I wished his return, that I might put his infant into his arms! That I trusted she would prove a pledge to insure our future happiness; that no upbraiding or recurring to the past should escape my lips; and that, for the sake of this babe, already so dearly

loved, I trusted we should hereafter live together in amity.

Mr. Tarleton went, from time to time, to see Balfour; and I had the satisfaction of hearing he was rapidly recovering. He proposed soon going to settle his affairs in Scotland, and then to join some regiment abroad. I never trusted myself to speak much of him to Mr. Tarleton, and he left Ireland without my knowing it till some time after. I received no answer to several of the letters I wrote to Mr. Connolly, who was incog. in Wales.—At length Mr. Tarleton wrote to him, to say that he might safely return, as Balfour was recovered, and had left Ireland. His answer was, that he never meant to return, and accompanied this intimation with a paper, empowering Mr. Tarleton to receive all his rents, and to allow me a certain portion, but intrusting the whole of his property to Mr. Tarleton for his child,

who he begged he in future would see taken care of; that, as his wife had never any regard for him, he had now met with a female, who knew how to appreciate his merits. The latter intelligence Mr. Tarleton kept to himself.

Bereaved of every comfort but my infant, I gave myself up entirely to the care of it, and, in watching her growing beauties, found my greatest happiness; but this was to be of short duration. In the spring following she caught the small pox in the natural way, and died. I then found I had never known true sorrow till that moment; my only stay of happiness seemed to be taken from me, and it was a long time ere I could recover my spirits in any degree. At this trying period, I derived my principal comfort from Mrs. Brownlow, who lived near me, and with my friends, the Tarletons, I spent most of my time. I despaired now of seeing

Mr. Connolly, nor did I wish it. The death of my child had taken from me every desire of being re-united to a man who had treated me so unfeelingly. I had hoped to have seen her taken to the bosom of her father, and that the virtuous charms of innocent childhood might have reclaimed him! But that was now over.

I wrote again to your father and mother;—it was then I received the account of her death. Two years after that, Mr. Connolly closed his short career. He had, Mr. Tarleton understood, spent a life of inebriety, which had so long undermined his constitution. I felt shocked at the account of his death; but truly grateful for the manner he left his property; the whole of the income for my life; wishing, as he expressed in his will, to make some reparation for the unhappiness he had occasioned; after

my death, it was entailed on the Wayley family.

The possession of so large an income, roused me from a state of apathy into which I had fallen :—I reflected that my powers of doing good to others were augmented; and that I had no right to live for myself alone. I went into the country, visited the poor tenants, relieved their wants, settled little pensions on those who were past their labours, placed the dreary and houseless wanderers in habitations of comfort, and in these avocations found a balm to my sorrows. For such purposes I occasionally visit this cottage, to dispense comfort to the surrounding poor, and settle my accounts with Patrick and Norah, who distribute my charities;—I tried one year to remain here a great part of the summer; but I found it would not do; what I had suffered came forcibly to my mind!

It was then I had the picture painted which struck you in the outside library. I shut up the rooms where the disastrous scene happened, and have never had resolution to go into them since. I have now, my dear Louisa, brought my history to that period when your reviving presence dispelled the clouds that had surrounded me, and leads me to hope, that though in early life my prospects were blighted, yet that I may have some serene hours. My dear girl now knows all the weaknesses and sorrows of her aunt, and, if after being acquainted with them, she can give me her esteem and love, most truly shall I prize her affection.

CHAP. X.

Louisa closed the Narrative, and was so much affected with what she had read, that she could not sleep. With heavy eyes, and a thousand different sensations, she met her aunt in the breakfast-parlour, and throwing herself into her arms, sobbed on her bosom. This spoke volumes to the feeling mind of Mrs. Connolly: she folded this new-found treasure to her heart; who, when she could speak, said, "Receive your Louisa, my dear aunt, and let her be, indeed, a balm and a solace for all your sufferings!"—"They were not," replied Mrs. Connolly, "entirely unmerited; my own impatience of disposition brought them on; we seldom, in life, experience uneasiness, without

being, in some measure, ourselves the cause. There are calamities, indeed, which no human foresight can foresee or prevent; such was the death of my beloved child! But I consider it now as a chastening rod; and trust it may, in some degree, be an expiation for my past failings. I have still many blessings, and the society of my Louisa is the greatest of all!"

Mrs. Brownlow participated in their happiness; and Mrs. Connolly declared it was the first time she had felt it so perfect in that house. Their time was much occupied in riding and walking about the beautiful country, and visiting the poor; visitors they had but few; Mrs. Connolly never staying long enough to make an acquaintance with the neighbouring families. Mr. Morrice, who was visiting at Lord Powerscourt's, called very often, which made a pleasant variety to their domestic party. Mrs. Con-

nolly employed Louisa in distributing her charities; and much she delighted in going into the cabins of those who required this aid, and listened to the grateful strain of praises bestowed on her who so largely contributed to their wants.

The Irish are profuse in their acknowledgments of favours conferred; they are naturally affectionate, kind-hearted, and hospitable; they would give you any thing their cabin afforded; their potatoe and butter-milk is freely offered to all who enter; and when they receive favors themselves, their hearts dilate in grateful thanks. The great flow of words peculiar to them bursts from their lips; and were they attended to as the poor are in the sister kingdom, they would be tractable; they would then have the tie of gratitude to bind them; and if their landlords and families resided amongst them, they would naturally get attached; they would have a reward for their la-

bours, which is the first incentive to industry; but too often deserted by those who ought to encourage and protect them, they fly from their poverty to whiskey; and, by inflaming passions naturally strong, become a pest to society, where they might be made comforts. The sums of money squandered at Bath, and other watering-places in England, would, if spent amongst their own tenantry, dispense comfort, that would of itself civilize them.

Louisa, delighted, passed most of her mornings in the occupation allotted her; and this intercourse with the distressed, opened a large field for reflection and improvement. She now felt "the luxury of doing good;" before, she had only known the theory; now the practical part called forth her exertions, and she blessed that parent who had so well prepared her mind to enable her to fulfil it with alacrity. Musing one morning on

the distressed situation of a large family she had just relieved, she strolled on further than was her usual custom; and meeting a woman, asked how far she was from Mrs. Connolly's cottage? and was told, some distance; for that she was close to Lord Powerscourt's. Not sorry to hear this, by the direction of the woman, she walked on, and soon reached the foot of the cascade; she stood some time contemplating this majestic sight; the water, falling down in torrents, rivetted her to the spot; and she was roused from her reverie by a beautiful child running out from a thicket, and taking hold of her gown. Alone, in that place, she appeared to Louisa as a fairy; perfect beauty reigned in her infantine face; she could not speak, but seemed to have a language peculiar to herself, as she muttered something, and pointed to the place from whence she had come. Louisa obeyed her wishes, not doubting but she

would find some one who would claim her. She followed the mazes of the wood in vain; not a creature appeared; all was quiet, save the dashing noise of the torrent, and the low murmuring of the rills, arising from the same grand source.

Louisa was astonished that no one seemed to be in search of the enchanting child, who still held by her gown, and seemed, with fretful impatience, to pull her on, as if she expected to see some person belonging to her; but on no one's appearing, or habitation to be seen, Louisa thought it best to return to the spot where she had first met her, as some one might be there in search of her. She, therefore, seated herself on a part of a craggy rock, and listening to the gentle murmuring of the surrounding waters, thought, with astonishment, of this adventure; the child amusing herself, by bringing pebbles, and putting them into her lap, whilst often looking at the

opening of the trees, as if she expected some one to fetch her. Louisa's eyes attentively followed her's, when suddenly rushing forward, as if she had seen the object so long expected, then tottering, with uncertain steps, she slipped into one of the streams of the cascade.—Louisa flew to the assistance of her new-found favourite; sprang forward, and rushing into the stream, saved it from its apparent danger!—A form seemed, at this moment, to glide through the trees, where they were not thickly set with evergreens. Louisa saw it was the figure of an elegant woman, in a close white robe; she waited in anxious expectation for her to join them, and claim the child; but here she was disappointed; no footsteps approached; and feeling herself wet, from the effects of saving the little creature, who was in the same condition, she thought the best plan was to get home as soon as possible. Taking

then the child, and to consult with her aunt on what was best to be done, she proceeded, constantly looking back, having no doubt but so sweet a creature would be claimed. But she looked in vain;—no anxious mother ran after, with distracted looks, to claim the object of her tenderest care! No father sought the infant of his fond expectation, but left it to the care of a stranger!—Rested now in the arms of beauty's self, lay an epitome of that beauty which held it!—Almost fainting under the burthen, Louisa reached her home; she hastily rung at the bell, and before the servants could answer it, the door was opened, and she fell into the arms of Mr. Morrice!

This gentleman had paid an early visit to the family at the Cottage, and waited for some time, expecting Louisa's return; and was just leaving the house, when he heard the violent ring at the door. He flew to open it, concluding it was her he

had anxiously expected. What was his surprise, when he saw her, with a beautiful child in her arms, tottering for support!—Mrs. Connolly and her friend hearing a bustle at the door, soon joined the party: all was confusion. Louisa's varying emotions had now come to a crisis; the wet which still hung about her brought on a shivering, and she was immediately put to bed. Mrs. Connolly, almost in a state of phrensy, was running about the house, convinced that Louisa would die! She was no longer mistress of herself. "No!" she exclaimed to Mrs. Brownlow, "she will not live; for no sooner have I discovered a blessing, than I am deprived of it!" In a state of despondency, she bitterly lamented her fate, and prayed that she might be enabled to bear this severe trial, should she lose her!

The most skilful medical man in the neighbourhood was sent for; he found

her in a high fever, occasioned by remaining so long in wet clothes; but he gave her aunt every hope of her speedy recovery. The innocent cause of this misfortune was neither slighted nor neglected; her winning ways secured the hearts of all the family. Mrs. Connolly had too much feeling and liberality, to shew any resentment to the little being who was so mysteriously thrown on their protection; she brought forcibly to her mind the infant she had lost, and pressed, with affectionate warmth, the little stranger to her bosom. On undressing her, the first night, the servant discovered a very beautiful gold locket, fastened under its frock, with the initials E. C. This Mrs. Connolly deposited carefully, thinking it might, at some future time, lead to a discovery of who the parents were.

The next day, she made every enquiry throughout the neighbourhood, but could not discover any tidings respecting her

parents. Mr. Morrice called every day to enquire for Louisa; she recovered rapidly, and the peace of the Cottage was nearly restored. On regaining her reason, she had given an exact account of the manner of her finding the child; during her illness, she incoherently mentioned it, but, on her perfect restoration, she gave a more clear account. Mrs. Connolly was of opinion that it had been lost by some careless servant; but Mrs. Brownlow did not know how to reconcile that idea, for then she would have been sought for. They determined on putting an advertisement in the papers, as, no doubt, then the infant would be claimed. Mr. Morrice undertook the management of this business. Louisa soon recovered; nothing remained but a degree of languor, which occasioned her going to bed earlier than the rest of the family.

One night, she had just awoke from an uneasy dream, when, by the pale glim-

mering of the candle, she saw a pale figure bending over the child that was sleeping in a bed in her own room. Starting from her pillow, she asked who it was? when, instead of answering, the figure hastily disappeared! She rung for her maid, and desired to know if any one had been in the room?—She assured her there had not; and told her lady she thought it must have been a dream. She felt certain of the contrary, and had some difficulty to compose herself again to sleep. She determined, on the following day, to search the rooms that were shut up, as she was sure the figure she had seen twice came from thence; having readily obtained her aunt's permission to satisfy her curiosity, Mrs. Connolly saying she and Mrs. Brownlow would go out, and make some enquiries about the child, thinking they might be able to trace from whence she came.

Louisa, grateful to her aunt for this

indulgence, felt truly the kindness a liberal mind always dispenses; for it is not so much the granting a favour, as the manner of doing it, which enhances the value. When they were gone, Louisa proceeded, with Norah, to examine the rooms, convinced some mystery was attached to them; but there no horrors awaited her: a very good library, well furnished with books, hung round with family pictures, alone claimed her attention. Norah pointed out one of Mr. Connolly, and she saw immediately the same features that were represented on the other side of the door; she looked intensely on it, and thought she could discover the traces of that moroseness and malice, which had made her aunt so unhappy. Shuddering, she turned to a likeness of Mrs. Connolly, hanging opposite, taken just before her marriage, in all the bloom of youthful beauty. Ah! thought Louisa, what a contrast! Why

did my aunt marry a man so unlike herself! "Yet," she exclaimed, "that might be my fate! for who knows, till after marriage, the real turn of mind of those we love! Blinded by passion, we are led into error. In a musing posture, she stood before this lovely picture, and whilst uttering this exclamation, was startled, by a hand being gently put on her shoulder! Turning round, she saw Mr. Morrice:

"You are a perfect runaway, Miss Courteney; here have I been looking all over the house, and have at last caught you, sweetly moralizing, in apartments I am a stranger to: were that a picture of a male, instead of a female, your apostrophizing would be sufficient to have given life to the inanimate canvass: but who, pray tell me, who has a right to be happy, if Miss Courteney is not so? She who dispenses it to all around, must surely carry it in her own bosom."

Louisa, confused by the eagerness of his manner, would not appear to take the compliment to herself; but telling him, that, with the curiority inherent in a female, she had wished to visit these rooms, which had been some time shut up. Mr. Morrice thought it a pity they were not used, as it appeared to be a most excellent library.

They looked at several of the books; examined the apartment, and a neat elegant dressing-room adjoining. Louisa saw nothing to alarm her; no appearance as if they were the residence of a spectre: she felt inclined to tell Mr. Morrice the reason of her inspecting them, but she was ashamed of her weakness; a degree of comfort reigned in the rooms, and she regretted she had not visited them before.

The library looked as if it had been lately inhabited; some remaining embers yet smoked in the grate; a table stood before the fire, with work on it, which

Norah hastily removing, endeavoured to account for, by saying she frequently sat there, to keep the rooms aired. The child accompanied Norah, who she had taken a great liking to, and appeared quite happy in running about the library, repeatedly calling "Mamma,"—the only word she could utter.

"How strange!" said Louisa; "this room, surely, must put her in mind of one she has been accustomed to!"

Norah did not reply; but taking the child in her arms, said, "Never mind mamma, you swate crater; you must love your own dare Miss Courteney, who, all along of finding you, was so ill: that she was." * The child held up her sweet mouth to kiss Louisa, as if she felt all the force of Norah's admonitions.

When they left the rooms, Mr. Morrice remarked, the morning was too fine for

* This is the common mode of speech of the peasantry of Ireland.

her to stay in the house. She said it was her intention to take a walk; he feared that would fatigue her too much; and said, "My phaeton is still at the door; pray let me have the honour of driving you. Come, will you shew me exactly the spot where you found this little charmer? The cascade is delightful this morning; the late rains have added to its beauty." Pleased, he handed her into the phaeton, and placing the child by her, proud of his charge, he drove from the door.

Mr. Morrice had seldom felt happier in the society of any one than in Louisa's; he plainly discovered that his conversation rivetted her attention; this increased the wish of pleasing, and created in his bosom a sentiment so like love, that it might be taken for it; nor could Mr. Morrice himself decide. He had once before experienced the same, but then he pursued the object on principles to,

destroy her peace of mind. Now it seemed to arise from a purer source; he bent to the power of beauty, and hallowed the virtue that enshrined it.

CHAP. XI.

On their arrival at the cascade, they got out of the phaeton, and walked through all the mazes and windings of this enchanting place,—Louisa describing to him the exact spot where she had first found the little girl. They conversed on the extraordinary circumstance, Louisa declaring she should feel a great reluctance at parting from her, and almost wished she might never be claimed!

"Happy child!" said Mr. Morrice: "Enviable fate! to be loved and protected by Miss Courteney! would I, too, had been lost!"

Louisa blushed at the energy of this expression, for Mr. Morrice had hitherto appeared to be more as a brother, and friendly counsellor, than an impassioned admirer, and she blushed still deeper on

seeing his eyes intently fixed on her face. Her embarrassment was diverted by a party of ladies and gentlemen passing them on horseback, who all noticed Mr. Morrice, and gazing at Louisa, smiled significantly; Mr. Morrice throwing a more than usual dignity in his manner. Their looks, and a kind of smile on their countenances, first gave Louisa the idea that she had committed an error in coming out alone with him; no sooner did this strike her than she was impatient to return, and seriously asked Mr. Morrice who they were that had just passed them? He replied, a party who were going to Lord Powerscourt's. They will think it strange, observed Louisa, to see me here with you; I conceive I have done wrong.

"And why so fastidious, Miss Courtêney? It is cruel to repent so soon of the happiness you have this morning conferred on me. Do you think I am unworthy

of the honour of attending you? Oh! could you but know with how much respect and esteem you have inspired me!" He wished to add love, but it trembled on his lips! A blush of self-accusation arose, he felt that if he were to marry, there was one who had a superior claim! This idea floated in his imagination, and kept him silent; he was roused by Louisa's begging they might immediately return home.

The moment she felt she had been guilty of an impropriety, she was anxious to repair it, and was impatient till the servant brought round the carriage which they had left at a little distance, when hastily jumping in, they drove rapidly home. To complete the confusion of Louisa, they had not gone far ere they met again the party that had before annoyed her; the impertinent stare of some of them was truly distressing, and the keen eye of one

female particularly struck her: on describing her to Mr. Morrice, he said, she was a Miss Dorinda Burke, who had flourished some years in the world without gaining the matrimonial shore, and that when she saw any one likely to be more fortunate than herself, it excited all her ire: should you meet her, Miss Courteney, avoid her as you would a basilisk; virtue, like your's, she cannot tarnish, but she may blight it: disappointed hopes make every lovely woman an object of envy to her. All astonishment, Louisa listened to Mr. Morrice's account of a character she could not have supposed existed.

This conversation occupied them till they reached the cottage; the child fatigued had fallen asleep in Louisa's lap, and Mrs. Connolly seeing them assisting her out, was apprehensive something had happened, and, much agitated, ran to receive them—but for her fears she

would have met Louisa, so as to prove she had been hurt at her going out with Mr. Morrice alone, for when she came home and found she was gone, she felt displeased; but the moment Mrs. Connolly thought Louisa was in danger, all displeasure vanished, and her heart welcomed a being so beloved, so necessary to her happiness. The out-stretched arms of the beauteous infant fell on the shoulders of Mrs. Connolly, and, pressing the lovely creature to her bosom, at the same time encircling her beloved Louisa, she forgot all in the joy of seeing her safe. Civility obliged her to ask Mr. Morrice to dine, he had not resolution to withstand the dangerous invitation, and again drank deep draughts of love.

On his return at night his feelings were not enviable. Conscience never sleeps, time may deaden the keenness of its sensations, but it again stings with

redoubled acrimony. He went to bed, but not to rest, the thoughts of one he had abandoned, kept him waking, yet, the image of Louisa dwelt on his mind, and he tried in vain to banish it.

On entering the breakfast-parlour at Lord Powerscourt's, he was attacked and joked most completely by the party assembled there, most of whom were those he had met, when driving Louisa the day before. A general quiz took place, or to use a still more fashionable expression, they gave him a complete rowing, which all the dignity of his manner was not sufficient to repel.

Lord Powerscourt, with a good humour peculiar to himself, observed, it was not at all uncommon for a man of Mr. Morrice's known gallantry, to be seen escorting a lovely woman: they all laughed and assented.

Mr. Morrice thought it necessary to

explain, and his manner in doing so, indicated how deeply he was interested in the cause.

When Lord Powerscourt understood it was the niece of Mrs. Connolly he had been escorting, he regretted her retired manner of living had prevented his seeing them, for he had heard much of the beauty of her niece: since the time of the celebrated Miss Gunnings, he had not known any one so much admired, and hoped, when he went to Dublin, he should be able to judge for himself.

Miss Burke spilt her tea, and had no appetite to eat her breakfast; she remarked Mr. Morrice was a happy man, exclusively to possess the attention of Miss Courteney, and she did not doubt but he was, in every respect, a favoured one, or a young lady would not have put herself entirely under his protection.

Mr. Morrice thought this sarcasm beneath his notice; not so Lady Almeria,

who was always the champion of innocence and beauty; she said, she had the honour of knowing Miss Courteney, and every one who had that happiness must admire the chaste purity of her manner, and discard every idea injurious to her purity.

Lord Powerscourt summoned the gentlemen to attend him to partridge-shooting, and on leaving the room, said, you will settle this point amicably; allow me to observe, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense.*" You must consider, Miss Burke, ladies of the present day are not so precise, as they used to be formerly. This was touching the tender string of her feelings, and an altercation arose so high, that had not Lady Powerscourt interfered, it was impossible to say where the dispute would have ended.

Miss Burke was obliged to be silent, but from that moment she declared in her mind eternal enmity to Louisa; she

had seen her several times in Dublin, her beauty had created her envy, and now it had done more, for she had long marked Mr. Morrice for her own. Past the meridian of life, she thought he would never marry a girl, and as he never before paid particular attention to any one, she had hoped, that as his affections appeared to be disengaged, she might have a chance, and for this purpose endeavoured to ingratiate herself with Lady Almeria. Proteus-like, she possessed the power of being every thing to every body; and this accommodating compliance of her manner had, at first, even deceived Mr. Morrice, and he had paid her some attention.

Lady Almeria had never before heard her break out so violently; she now saw her character in a different light to what it had ever appeared, and she determined in future to treat her with coolness. Lady Almeria called frequently on Mrs.

Connolly, and had formed what had long been her wish, a more intimate acquaintance with Louisa.

Mr. Courteney, the elder brother of Mrs. Connolly, had been lately in the habit of writing to his sister; and, from the tenor of his letters, she could perceive he had felt the fallacy of selfish enjoyments, and had found, from cheerless experience, that happiness is incomplete, unless participated: it was evident he wished to revive the ties of consanguinity, as he informed his sister he intended soon to visit her, and hoped, in future, to live on the most social terms. Mrs. Connolly's disposition, naturally forgiving, could not refuse this offer of reconciliation. Louisa had a kind of dread at the idea of seeing her uncle; for, from her infancy, she knew of his unrelenting cruelty to her parents, and she felt it would be a difficult task to love, or even to feel for him those sen-

timents of regard and respect, nature gave him a right to demand.

Mrs. Connolly told Mrs. Brownlow and Louisa she should return to Dublin sooner than she had intended: the regret Louisa expressed on leaving the Cottage, made her aunt fear that the attention of Mr. Morrice had, in a great degree, attached her to it, and she took this opportunity of telling her, with respect to that gentleman, she had acted imprudently, and condemned her having gone out with him alone; "for had you been met," continued Mrs. Connolly, "it would have had a strange appearance."

Louisa candidly acknowledged their having seen a party in the grounds, and had felt much abashed, and that its impropriety then occurred to her.—"And so you will ever find it through life," said Mrs. Connolly; "an imprudent action brings remorse, which takes from the enjoyment of the moment. Let your

conduct, my Louisa, be always such as to defy the whisper of scandal; it is a difficult lesson to attain, but the world will teach it you."

The advice of her aunt made a great impression on Louisa, as she knew it was dictated by affection and experience.—Happy the female who has such a monitress; one who, having suffered herself, knew how to guard the inexperienced from the rock which dashed her own happiness.

Louisa promised to be more guarded. Mrs. Connolly left her to make the necessary preparations for their journey. Mrs. Brownlow and Louisa quitted the cottage with regret, the former was depressed at the idea of parting from her friends, for she had particularly attached herself to their protegée, and wished much to keep her. Neither Mrs. Connolly nor Louisa could consent to this, but promised she should frequently visit her.

Mrs. Brownlow often fancied she could trace a likeness to her daughter when at that age; a heart deprived of an object dear to it, feels forlorn, and catches at any thing that can recal the pleasing image: sad, and reluctantly, she bid her farewel. The little playful creature, insensible of the feelings that impelled Mrs. Brownlow to embrace her, with an unusual pressure, fondly threw her arms around her neck, and remained asleep on her lap till they reached Dublin.

Parting from their beloved friend, Mrs. Brownlow, they proceeded to Sackville-street. No one was more delighted at the return of the party than Miss Maude, who came to them the moment she heard of their arrival; warm-hearted and affectionate, she had attached herself to Louisa, and much regretted she could not pay them a visit during their stay in the country, but had been pre-

vented by the indisposition of Lady Doneraile.

Louisa was surprised to find Mr. Spenser still continued with them; his stay, she said, had been protracted by the same cause; she blushed as she spoke; her friend had too much delicacy to add to her confusion by seeming to notice it.

Lady Almeria Morrice called whilst they were conversing; she was all anxiety to hear from Louisa a particular account of the adventure of finding the child, her brother having informed her of the circumstance; but referred her to Louisa for the particulars, which, on hearing, she was perfectly delighted at the romance of the adventure; wished it had happened to her; "how delightful," she exclaimed, "to be chosen a protector to so interesting a creature," who she begged to see!

The beautiful child coming into the room, Lady Almeria was perfectly in

raptures with her, declaring it added a beauty and an interest to Louisa, having this enchanting creature seated on her lap, and placing her there, retired some steps to view the effect. Her rhapsody was interrupted by Miss Maude, saying, she must see Mrs. Connolly, as she had been commissioned by her aunt to say, that if she could trust her niece with them, she would be most happy to chaperone her to the masquerade. Now my aunt declares, unless you go, I shall not—therefore, my dear, dear Miss Courteney, pray go, for Mr. Spenser is soon to return to England, and it will be delightful to spend another happy evening together; now do not look so serious, for then I know you will refuse.

Louisa said, she had no objection, if her aunt approved; Miss Maude immediately went to Mrs. Connolly, and teazed her into compliance, provided Lady Doneraile would keep constantly

near Louisa, for as it would be quite a new scene to her, she could not help being apprehensive, though it would appear fastidious, to keep her from this gratification, and to refuse the solicitations of her friends.

Lady Almeria told them she purposed being there—Miss Maude delighted, returned to Lady Donéraile, to inform her of the success of her application.

Louisa once more seated in Sackville-street, felt herself perfectly at home. The warm-hearted manners of the Irish are formed to attach, whilst their ease invites to confidence. She did not give in to all the gaieties to which she was invited, for she too sadly saw the declining health of her aunt: in the society of those friends she valued, and domestic enjoyments, she spent some of her happiest hours. Her little favourite was a constant source of amusement to her.—Mr. Morrice, who was in the habit

of visiting in Sackville-street, constantly witnessed these home-bred enjoyments not felt by the world in general; they called for his approbation, and sunk insensibly to his heart, which unconsciously became all her own: he had seen her shine in the drawing-room, but still more resplendent did she appear to him in the domestic sphere, for her mind had been formed on the basis of virtue; her personal charms adding attractions to her character. Each night did Mr. Morrice determine to avoid the fascination of her society, but every morning he found himself at Mrs. Connolly's. Man is at best but an imperfect, irresolute being, and a man in love the most uncertain of all; his passions are strong gales which lead him where they will, and with all the worldly knowledge and experience of Mr. Morrice, they baffled his powers of managing them: he could not fail of being an interesting character to Louisa—

few females are proof against the unremitting and delicate attentions of a pleasant man, that man possessing fascinating manners, and superior understanding: if she saw any thing she admired, she wished for him; if she read a new publication, she would not decide on it till his opinion gave it a sanction. Her's was a strong preference without being love; every heart that is disengaged, no doubt felt, at some period, as Louisa's did; the mind must always have something to rest on, and Mr. Morrice's intimacy with Mrs. Connolly, secured him a distinguished place in Louisa's: she preferred him to every man she had seen in Dublin; she could have told him all her thoughts with the confidence of a sister, and often wished she had been blessed with a brother, and that brother Mr. Morrice.

Mrs. Connolly told him he must take care of her niece at the masquerade,

which he readily promised to do, but would not tell what character he intended to assume, as then, he said, he should lose half his power.

END OF VOL. I.

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